the weekly standard

DECEMBER 2, 2002

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HEATHER MAC DONALD

Holiday Reading

FRED BARNES on Bob Woodward's *Bush at War*
MARGARET BOERNER on the postmodern novel
MEGHAN COX GURDON on working mothers
ROBERT D. NOVAK on Patton's greatness
KANE WEBB on the cult of Donna Tartt
WOODY WEST on Alan Furst's spies

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Switch

Sen. Olympia Snowe

Sen. Lincoln Chafee

Sen. Arlen Specter

Control of the U.S. Senate once again falls to Trent Lott and a band of GOP radicals who call themselves "conservative." They're anything but that.

Miscasting a thin electoral victory as a mandate, they'll move an agenda designed to repay their corporate funders and please their activist base. They'll gut the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act. Pack federal courts with anti-choice, anti-consumer judges. Excuse corporate wrongdoing with wrist slaps. Shift taxes from the wealthy to working families.

Senate GOP moderates like Olympia Snowe, Lincoln Chafee and Arlen Specter must be thinking: ***MY constituents didn't vote for this agenda. It's not one that MY conscience and values support.***

That's what Jim Jeffords thought when GOP radicals ran the Senate in 2000. He did something courageous: ***He became an Independent and caucused with Democrats, wresting Senate control from Lott.***

Now, **Working Assets** is urging **Snowe, Chafee** and **Specter** to "pull a Jeffords," says co-founder Michael Kieschnick. "They should switch – not for any love of Democrats, but for the majority of Americans who favor environmental protection, reproductive choice, and other moderate policies."

"It's a long shot," Kieschnick admits. **"But citizens of good conscience should let these senators know they admire independence."**

TomPaine.common sense
A Public Interest Journal

TomPaine.com: SWITCH
Featuring Jeffords' "Declaration of Independence" and "Pull A Jeffords – Please" by Michael Kieschnick, ***WorkingAssets.com/switch.***

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the weekly Standard

THE WEEKLY STANDARD (ISSN 1083-3013) is published weekly (except the first week in January, the second week in July, the third week in August, and the first week in September) by News America Incorporated, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-283-2014. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96153, Washington, DC 20090-6153; changes of address to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Yearly subscriptions, $78.00. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-850-682-7653 for subscription inquiries. Visa/MasterCard payment accepted. Cover price, $3.95. Back issues, $3.95 (includes postage and handling). Send manuscripts and letters to the editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. For a copy of THE WEEKLY STANDARD Privacy Policy, visit www.weeklystandard.com or write to Customer Service, THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington, D.C. 20036. THE WEEKLY STANDARD Advertising Sales Office in Washington, DC, is 1-202-293-4900. Advertising Production: Call John L. Mackall 1-202-496-3354. Copyright 2002, News America Incorporated. All rights reserved. No material in THE WEEKLY STANDARD may be reprinted without permission of the copyright owner. THE WEEKLY STANDARD is a trademark of News America Incorporated.

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Harvard's Disappearing Backbone

Last week, THE SCRAPBOOK foolishly ran an item under the headline, "Harvard Grows a Backbone." We won't make that mistake again. Shortly after we applauded the university for disinviting Ulster poet and Oxford lecturer Tom Paulin—who had been scheduled to deliver the annual Morris Gray poetry lecture—Harvard's English department unanimously reinvited him. Professor Peter Sacks was quoted in the *Boston Globe* on the reinvitation: "Free speech was a principle that needed upholding here. This was a clear reaffirmation that the department stood strongly by the First Amendment."

The "speech" that Harvard's English teachers here pay obeisance to is arguably not protected by the First Amendment. Specifically, it was an incitement to murder American Jews who had become Israeli settlers. Last April, Paulin told the Egyptian paper *Al-Ahram Weekly* that these "Brooklyn-born" settlers "should be shot dead. I think they are Nazis, racists, I feel nothing but hatred for them." Paulin has complained that this line was wrenched from its context. Okay, here's a little more context from the same interview: "I can understand how [Palestinian] suicide bombers feel," Paulin said. "I think, though, it is better to resort to conventional guerrilla warfare. I think attacks on civilians in fact boost morale."

Not to be pedantic, but the First Amendment also has nothing to do with the decision by a private university to bestow, or not bestow, the honor of delivering the annual Morris Gray poetry lecture. Of course, we don't actually expect the English faculty to understand constitutional law. We suspect that for them the words "First Amendment" serve the purpose of a ritual incantation. Translation: "We wouldn't want anyone to think that we're too spineless to take a stand against someone who declares open season on the Jews. We'll honor whom we damn well please. It's a matter of high principle. Now shut up and leave us alone."

In an apparently unrelated development, the Harvard Law School is simultaneously immersed in a debate over adopting a code restricting offensive speech. It will be interesting to see if the law students carve out an exception for inciting the murder of Jews (perhaps restricted to poets with a BBC pedigree), or if that will remain the franchise of the English department.

One witty correspondent, rightfully making fun of our "backbone" headline, forwarded us the *Chronicle of Higher Education*'s report on Harvard's cave-in with the comment: "file under osteoporosis." This reminded us of the timeless Winston Churchill send-up of Ramsay MacDonald in the House of Commons, January 28, 1931:

> I remember, when I was a child, being taken to the celebrated Barnum's Circus, which contained an exhibition of freaks and monstrosities, but the exhibit on the programme which I most desired to see was the one described as "The Boneless Wonder." My parents judged that that spectacle would be too revolting and demoralizing for my youthful eye, and I have waited fifty years to see the Boneless Wonder sitting on the Treasury Bench.

Now you can see the same thing at the finest American universities. The passage of an additional 70 years has not made the spectacle any less revolting and demoralizing. ♦

Stupid Law Professor Tricks

Elsewhere in the groves of academe, University of Illinois professor Francis A. Boyle has announced plans to lead a nationwide law school boycott of *Foreign Relations and National Security Law: Cases, Materials and Simulations*, a widely used and well-respected textbook coauthored by Michael J. Glennon of the Fletcher School at Tufts University. "Students must not be exposed to this Nazi philosophy of international legal nihilism," Boyle explains, in an Internet "listserve" message distributed across the country by the Association of American Law Schools.

There's nothing wrong with the book itself, mind you; Boyle has (or had) been using it with his own students since the day it was published. No, the problem is the man who wrote the book, Professor Glennon. Whose *New York Times* op-ed last Thursday—explaining the implications for international law of a non-U.N.-sanctioned war against Iraq—struck Boyle as "pretty appalling." It's "a matter of good faith and conscience," Boyle says. "I will have to steer people away from [Glennon] and Fletcher."

First things first: Francis A. Boyle is an idiot.

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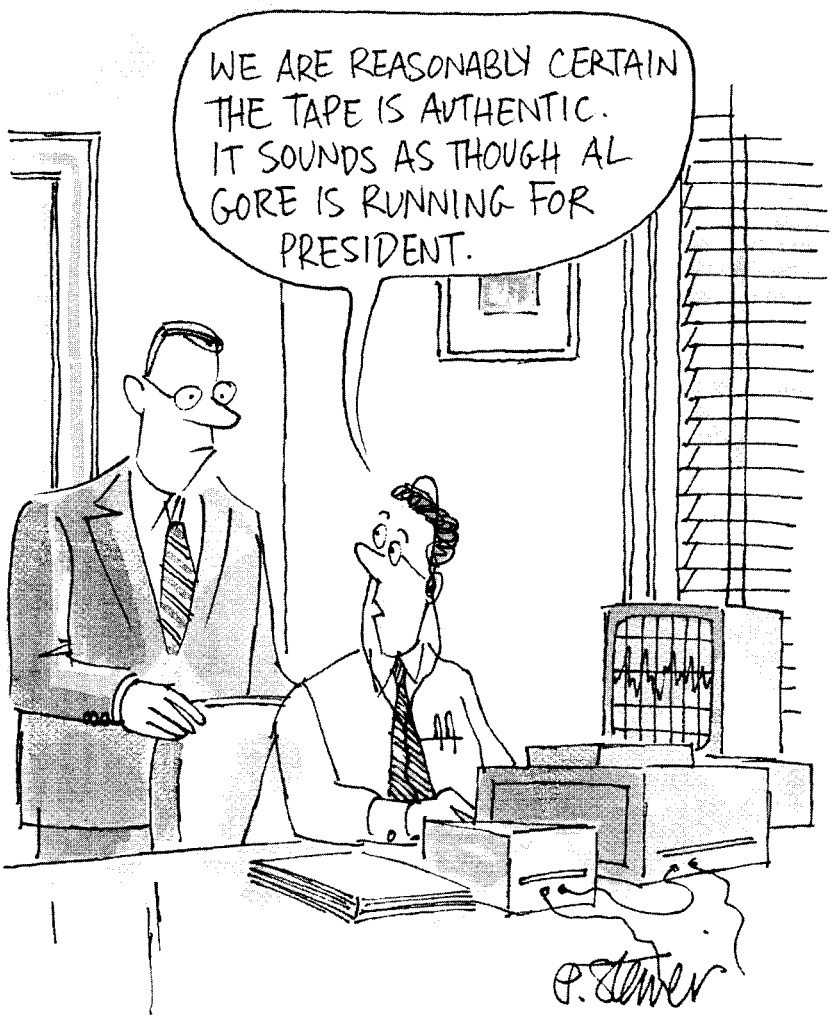

Michael J. Glennon, formerly the Democratic lead counsel to Frank Church's Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the late 1970s, is not a "Nazi." Nothing in Glennon's *Times* piece—about how the U.N. Charter has "tragically" lost meaningful legal authority to prevent war—is an expression of "nihilism." And Boyle, in any case, wouldn't know real nihilism if it crawled right up and sat on his lap. This is the same man generally credited with first suggesting university divestiture of stock in companies doing business with Israel. Boyle is also the leader of lonely struggles to impeach President Bush and seek international recognition of the independent nation of Hawaii. He is an extremist, in other words. We would like to think that his latest and, you might even say, 1930s-style effort—to ban a book—won't get very far.

But you never can tell nowadays. Boyle's outburst against Glennon, after all, has occasioned hardly a sentence of critical commentary on the AALS listserve. One full professor calls another full professor a Nazi in public, and none of the other professors even raises an eyebrow—such is the level of contemporary discourse on American law school campuses. ♦

Oops

Because of an editing error in John J. DiIulio Jr's election analysis "Mandate Mongering" (November 18), voter turnout for midterm elections since 1970 was said not to have exceeded 38 percent. This is incorrect. Thirty-eight percent is actually the *average* voter turnout in midterm elections since 1970.

And in Noemie Emery's "Losers for the American Way" (November 25), we should have noted that the won-lost percentages for candidates backed by NARAL and EMILY's List were first compiled in an excellent analysis by the *National Journal*'s Peter H. Stone and Shawn Zeller ("Business and Conservative Groups Won Big"). ♦

Help Wanted

The Weekly Standard is looking to fill two positions.

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Casual

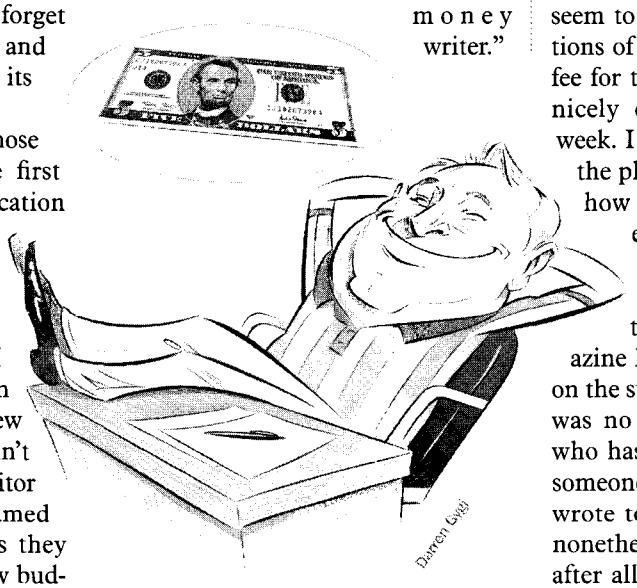
Money Writer

Many years ago, when I was a sub-editor at the *New Leader* magazine, I tried to get the literary journalist Dwight Macdonald, whom at the time I much admired, to write something for the magazine. I don't remember what it was I wanted him to write—a book review, I think—but I do recall his writing back to say that, sorry, he couldn't do as I requested because he was—I shall never forget the phrase—"a money writer," and the *New Leader* was famous for its low pay.

I say "low pay," but this, in those days, was a euphemism. The first piece I myself wrote for publication appeared there, in 1959, when I was 22 and in the Army, stationed at Little Rock, Arkansas. At first I felt thrilled to have something published; then I began to wonder if, along with the thrill, I might make a few bucks into the bargain. I didn't know it at the time, but the editor of the *New Leader*, a man named S. M. Levitas, was notably—as they might put it in Hollywood—low budget. He was said to have smoked two packs of cigarettes a day without ever buying any. Sub-editors would enter his office obstreperously demanding a raise and would depart in defeat with the gift of a review copy of some novel of tertiary interest.

I wrote to Mr. Levitas inquiring about the payment for my piece, wondering if it might somehow have gone astray, perhaps in the mail. He wrote back to say that I was "still a young man and perhaps unaware that the truth had no price tag. The *New Leader* does not pay its contributors." The following sentence, I felt, could have used a transition but received none: "I am here to encourage you to do more writing for our magazine."

Over the years I have made the astounding discovery that between writing for money and writing for no money, writing for money is much to be preferred. True, there are times when larger fees mean poorer audiences; and there are other times—when a genuinely good cause is involved—when writing for nothing can be an honor. But where possible, better to be, in Dwight Macdonald's phrase, "a money writer."



Yet, after more than forty years at the magical keyboard, I have always been secretly (until now) amazed that anyone is actually willing to pay me for the mere construction of sentences on topics mostly of my own choosing. Oughtn't I instead to be paying them to help defray the costs of paper and postage, or at least to be sending thank-you notes (perhaps accompanied by ten-pound boxes of Whitman's Samplers) to the printers who are good enough to set my words in print? Over the years, I have kept quiet about this, cashed the checks, and tremblingly awaited word that I would have to return all the money.

I thought of the long-dead Sol Levitas a couple of months ago when my agent sent me an e-mail reporting that a new magazine, whose readership was to be made up of multi-millionaires, wanted me to write a piece on the current distinction between Old Money and New Money, for which it would pay me $5 a word. The only drawback was that the editor wanted only 700 words. Still, at $5 a word I would write a confession to multiple murders, and wrote back to my agent, in the words of James Joyce's Molly Bloom, "Yes I said yes I will yes."

I was about to leave on a week's holiday in California with my wife and granddaughter, ending with a two-day stay at the Ritz-Carlton in San Francisco. (As I grow older, I seem to require irregular small injections of high *luxe*.) I thought that my fee for this little piece, $3,500, would nicely cover our expenses for the week. I wrote it out, in longhand, on the plane out to the coast, thinking how just the world was when talent was so nicely recognized and handsomely rewarded.

Back in Chicago, I learned that the editorship of the magazine had changed, and that a piece on the subject of Old and New Money was no longer wanted. My agent—who has the splendid first name, for someone in her profession, of Hope—wrote to the magazine that it ought nonetheless to pay me the full fee, for after all I had written the piece that was commissioned. They felt otherwise. Threats were hurled, but to no avail. Finally a kill fee of 20 percent, or $700, was offered. It was accepted with properly acrimonious regrets. But before a check was sent, an announcement from the magazine reported that all payments were to be delayed by sixty days. My guess is that the magazine will go under and that I shall never see a penny.

Am I justified henceforth, I wonder, in thinking of myself as a $5-a-word man? Much as I would like to, the answer is probably, alas, no. The truth may or may not have a price tag, but I begin to get the feeling that maybe I ain't no money writer.

Joseph Epstein

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The U.N. Trap

While I read with considerable interest "The U.N. Trap?" (Nov. 18), I couldn't help but think that William Kristol and Robert Kagan ignore at least one logical possibility in our ongoing card game with Iraq.

Perhaps our commander in chief holds a trump card in his hand that he has not revealed: hard, photographic evidence of Saddam's nuclear capability. Setting up an inspection regime would therefore only be bait to get Saddam to declare some, though certainly not all, of his weapons of mass destruction. At some point in the next few months, either at a Blix blocking point or when a final, less-than-decisive report has been authored which recommends (as Kristol and Kagan foresee) further inspections, the United States goes to the Security Council and presents the trump card.

Just like forty years ago, our U.N. representative will show the world the irrefutable photographic evidence of continuing treachery and mendacity and make clear that the only remaining option is war.

Perhaps this is why Bush failed to present any real new evidence in September when he asked the U.N. for a resolution and further explains why he has seemed to cave on the current, unanimous resolution.

But then again, what do I know? As a rabbi in Southern California, my only connection to the intelligence community is a stack of Tom Clancy novels and an overactive imagination.

One truly hopes, though, that the Bush foreign affairs team has more talent and backbone than it has recently demonstrated.

Mark Ankcorn
Manhattan Beach, CA

Thanks for the cogent editorial "The U.N. Trap?" by Robert Kagan and William Kristol. There are few conservatives who have found the courage to be critical of their president's "success."

Kagan and Kristol have mentioned the compromises involved, such as abandoning regime change, entering the inspections quagmire, delaying action, and ceding control to other parties. They might have added that, in the event of failure, Bush can no longer employ the previous arguments for war, such as Iraq's violation of the ceasefire agreements, or of previous U.N. resolutions. Moreover, there is now the possibility that the inspectors can be turned into hostages.

Kagan and Kristol's case for optimism, which rests on faith in President Bush's determination, may be misguided. I do not doubt Bush's desire to win, but he has other goals as well, along with external constraints, that preclude the application of an overall governing principle.

Bush has engaged in a litany of sacrificial compromises, both in the Middle East and at home. He does not say that the defense of America and its citizens is the quintessential obligation of our government, or that this should overshadow all other considerations, and necessitate that we employ whatever means are necessary for victory in Iraq. Faced with numerous competing goals, Bush can offer no single comprehensive strategy, nor any criteria for what constitutes a victory in the war on terror, or in Iraq, let alone build the nation's resolve.

Until Bush presents a single, solid principle for standing up to our enemies, we might well remain mired in counterproductive negotiations.

Allen Weingarten
Morristown, NJ

Napoleon Bonaparte once said, "If you start to take Vienna—take Vienna."

In "The U.N. Trap?" William Kristol and Robert Kagan argue persuasively that the United States has effectively surrendered the right to make war on its enemies to the United Nations in general, and to the U.N. Security Council in particular, and in so doing have entered a dangerous trap from which it will be difficult to extract ourselves. I agree.

The assumption used to bait this trap was the proposition that in war, the United States is better served by forming a coalition than going it alone. This proposition is demonstrably false, for the United States is the world's only hyper-

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power and, moreover, the proposition is inherently dangerous to us, insofar as it prevents us from acting in our own self-defense as defined by us.

The last great coalition war was World War II. The three principal members were the United States, the United Kingdom, and the USSR, appropriately called "The Big Three." Two facts of overriding importance contributed to the formation of the coalition that defeated Hitler. First, no one of these three powers was strong enough to defeat the Third Reich alone, or in coalition with any other single nation. If Hitler was to be defeated, it would take the combined strength of all three nations. Second, the reverse was not true—Hitler had the strength to defeat the two continental powers, if not simultaneously, then in seriatim, and, he obviously intended to do so at the earliest opportunity.

The reason this coalition was successful was that it was formed out of dire military necessity. In 1941, the Continental powers begged us to give them aid. Their continued national existence depended on obtaining our help. Today, the United States is so vastly superior to Iraq, that there is no military reason to form an alliance with anyone to defeat Saddam. While it might be more convenient to have allies in the region (for bases, etc.), American military power and its ability to project that power are sufficient to prevail alone and unaided.

Why then does the Bush administration set so much store by the U.N. and phony alliances? I suspect it is in the nature of our democracy itself. Presidents are elected by being loved. Years of effort are involved in shaping the personality to get elected. Once occupying the chair, the president finds that to win a war, he must be feared. This president seems to be having trouble with the role change.

He would be wise to listen to the advice of Bonaparte, and reject that of Chirac.

JAMES H. FINK
Lincoln, MA

WILLIAM KRISTOL and Robert Kagan's analysis of the American "victory" in the Security Council is excellent. But a critique along similar lines is urgently needed of Bush's advocacy of, and Sharon's acquiescence in, a "provisional Palestinian state."

Why are Israel's friends here so silent over such an obviously dangerous delusion as Oslo warmed over?

The same forces Kristol and Kagan brilliantly detail to be at play in diluting the Bush effort against Saddam have set up this Palestinian trap. Can this danger also be circumvented by Bush's political willpower, and Sharon's?

BERTRAM KORN
Elkins Park, PA

NO MORE UNSEEMLINESS

NOEMIE EMERY hits the nail on the head with "The Seemliness Issue" (Nov. 18). Here is another seemliness-related reason for the Democrats' defeat. It is so big, so obvious that it often goes unremarked upon, but was clearly a decisive factor in the 2002 election.

In the immediate response to 9/11 the Democrats rallied around the president, as they should have. However, around mid-December when Congress left for Christmas break, there was a profound change. A variety of Democratic congressmen and senators appeared on television with veiled or not-so-veiled criticisms of George W. Bush. I was disturbed. We were still bombing in Afghanistan, after all. But when Enron erupted, the Democrats and their cohorts in the media jumped gleefully on the opportunity to try to throw mud at the president, to my utter dismay.

It seemed obvious to me what was going on: Bring down Bush's favorability ratings to boost Democrats' chances in the coming elections, and damn the best interests of the United States in the process.

FLORENCE SCHMIEG
Newark, DE

IN BLACK AND WHITE

BETH HENARY ALLEGES in her brief review of Linda Chavez's book *An Unlikely Conservative* (THE STANDARD READER, Nov. 18) that "affirmative action no doubt landed [Chavez] at a plum graduate school." But the truth of that assertion is in fact quite doubtful, since Chavez had top GRE scores and undergraduate grades, as the book made evident.

Henary's assertion does reinforce one of Chavez's themes, however. Non-Asian minority students, whatever their real qualifications, are inevitably tainted by affirmative action programs. Their teachers and peers at the time—and, down the road, those who review their books—will too often assume they could not have succeeded academically without racial double-standards.

ABIGAIL THERNSTROM
Cambridge, MA

SUPPORT FROM STATE?

IN HIS OTHERWISE EXCELLENT "Do-It-Yourself Regime Change" (Nov. 11), Eli J. Lake writes that the State Department had "played an advisory role" in my activities on behalf of the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict. Although we know that individuals in the State Department have been supportive of the Iraqi opposition groups who have also sought our counsel, the Center has not received advice or support from the State Department or any other agency of the U.S. government.

PETER ACKERMAN
Chair, International Center on Nonviolent Conflict
Washington, DC

• • •

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the weekly Standard

The Democrats' Abuse Excuse

After an electoral loss, sour grapes is a normal response. Few politicians are big enough to manage a nobler one. A political candidacy puts forward a set of ideas about how a decent society ought to be run; a political defeat hands power to people who don't share the losing candidate's goals, and may not even understand them. That is why politicians so often react to defeat with outright incomprehension. Al Gore's rampage through the legal system in hopes of overturning the election of 2000—as if his defeat were some kind of bureaucratic misunderstanding—was only a particularly dramatic product of the kind of incomprehension that is common among unlucky politicians of all parties. Witness Republican bellyaching in recent years about how Democrats win by "scaring voters" about Medicare—as if the question of whether voters *ought* to be scared were immaterial.

It would be comforting to view the strange press conference held last Wednesday by outgoing Senate majority leader Tom Daschle—in which he blamed Rush Limbaugh and other talk-show hosts for inciting hatred—as an instance of garden-variety sore-loserdom. But the charges Daschle flung indicate something more serious: an anti-democratic arrogance that looks increasingly like a bedrock principle of the Democratic party.

Daschle claimed that Limbaugh had, willy-nilly, incited "threats" against him. His proof was that Limbaugh had criticized what he took to be Daschle's partisan obstruction of popular legislation. "When I was accused of being an obstructionist," Daschle said, "there was a corresponding, a very significant, increase in the number of issues that my family and I had to deal with." Using in this instance the weasel-word "issues," rather than specifying any threats, enabled Daschle to level grave charges at Limbaugh on unknown evidence and then to assimilate Limbaugh's conduct to that of America's terrorist enemies.

"You know," Daschle mused, "we see it in foreign countries and we think, 'Well, my God, how can this religious fundamentalism become so violent?' Well, it's that same shrill rhetoric, it's that same shrill power that motivates. . . . And that's happening in this country. And I worry about where over the course of the next decade this is all going to go. . . . Let's just pray—and I mean pray—that it doesn't get to that point."

Daschle's disingenuousness and hypocrisy are startling. First, Limbaugh ranks rather low on the calumny scale compared with certain of Daschle's fellow Democrats. We cannot think of a Republican equivalent of Alec Baldwin's urging, at the height of the Lewinsky scandal, that impeachment manager Henry Hyde be stoned to death. Nor can we recall any Republican commercial with nearly the potential to incite hatred as the Democratic ads run in the 2000 campaign cycle warning that black churches would burn if Republicans were elected. And of course Daschle wasn't warning his fellow Democrats against indulging in hate speech. He led into his tirade about conservative talk radio by expressing his hopes that Democrats could learn to imitate it. ("We were just talking with some experts a couple of days ago about how, if we're going to try to break through as Democrats, we have to have the same edge that Republicans do.")

For Daschle, sauce for the goose doesn't belong anywhere near the gander. While casting Limbaugh's accusation of obstruction as a potentially violence-abetting sin, his own speech had as its leitmotif accusations of *Republican* obstruction. "This is a list of all of the things that Republicans stopped us from doing," Daschle began. "Prescription drug coverage, the education funding, appropriations for homeland defense, funding for election reform, the minimum wage, pension protection, farm disaster assistance, bankruptcy reform, the energy bill. So obviously there was a lot of work left on the table, in large measure because the far right chose not to allow it to be enacted."

The most troubling aspect of Daschle's performance—and a plausible explanation for his party's recent electoral failures—was his refusal to acknowledge that Limbaugh's listeners' opinions had any possible validity. What they were was "entertainment," and what made them so entertaining was that they were uttered by

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maleficent morons: "If entertainment becomes so much a part of politics," Daschle said, "and if that entertainment drives an emotional movement in this country among some people who don't know the difference between entertainment and politics, and who are then so energized to go out and hurt somebody, that troubles me about where politics in America is going."

Certain liberal commentators swallowed this criticism whole. Said Fox News's Alan Colmes of his own talk-show work: "I give listeners enough credit to know that it's entertainment." Kind of like pro wrestling.

Nor did Limbaugh himself seem to realize the gravity of Daschle's insult to his listeners, taking it as a mere partisan ploy. "Let me tell you what's going on here, folks," Limbaugh said. "This is not spontaneous today. This is not spontaneous. If it were spontaneous, this would have happened when the arrival of the so-called threats occurred. This is part of a well thought out strategy by the Democrats to counter the influence of this program."

Unfortunately, Daschle's remarks probably *were* spontaneous. They reflected an instinctual defense of the high and the mighty (whom Daschle referred to throughout as "those of us in public life") from oversight by the voting public, who are cast not just as irrelevant but as a menace to public order. "What happens when Rush Limbaugh attacks those of us in public life," Daschle said, "is that people aren't satisfied just to listen, they want to act because they get emotionally invested." Gee whiz! Imagine the citizens of a democratic republic getting "emotionally invested" in the affairs of their country! Imagine voters so uppity that they "aren't satisfied just to listen," but actually participate and organize!

The best evidence that Daschle was speaking off-the-cuff is that he closed his Limbaugh remarks by deploring the "emotional fervor that is sometimes not contained and therefore then leads to other actions that are outside the control of anybody in the media or anybody in politics." That happens to be an accurate diagnosis of what happened on Election Day. The Democrats struggled mightily to bully voters into an idea of what they were supposed to care about, barraging the newspapers and airwaves with polling "evidence" that various new federal benefits were a more fitting object of their attentions than mass murder in Manhattan and a potentially nuclear-armed Saddam Hussein. But wartime elections like that of 2002 are not amenable to being won with a bag of oratorical and public-relations tricks. Such an election was never likely to play to the strengths of the Democratic Senate majority as it developed under the decidedly unlamented leadership of Tom Daschle.

—*Christopher Caldwell, for the Editors*

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Hamilton, Madison & Jay in Jerusalem

How do you say *The Federalist* in Hebrew?

BY PETER BERKOWITZ

Jerusalem

WHATEVER may be going on in the cultural and intellectual life of other countries in the Middle East, here in Israel—in the midst of a bloody and protracted war, with its civilian population under constant threat of deadly terrorist attack, in the wake of the collapse of Ariel Sharon's national unity government and the calling of new elections, and as a severely ailing economy takes its daily toll—they have just held a remarkably well-attended conference on *The Federalist*.

Why *The Federalist*—Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay's authoritative exposition of the principles of the American Constitution—in Israel? And why just now?

The immediate occasion for the conference was the publication of the first Hebrew translation of *The Federalist*. Both conference and translation are initiatives of the Shalem Center (disclosure: this magazine's editor sits on the center's board). Founded in Jerusalem eight years ago by a small group of enterprising intellectuals led by Yoram Hazony and Dan Polisar, late '80s Princeton graduates and then-recent immigrants to Israel, Shalem has in a short time grown into a respected and influential institution. It publishes a magazine in Hebrew (*Techelet*) and English (*Azure*) on Jewish politics and thought; it supports senior scholars from Israel and abroad (including Michael Oren, author of the *New York Times* best-seller *Six Days of War*); it takes strong stands on divisive public policy issues (such as the battle over the tendentious accounts some Israeli textbooks offer of the alleged injustice at the heart of the Zionist enterprise); and, last but not least, it is engaged in translating classics of political thought into Hebrew. *The Federalist* is only the latest on a list that includes Friedrich von Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* and Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

Shalem, plainly, is a think tank with a point of view, and its success has redounded to the benefit of liberal democracy in Israel. For by the late 1990s when Shalem began to make its presence felt, Israel had gone more than 50 years (stretching back before the creation of the state) without a conservative party that drew sustenance from and argued for ideas. Which means that for more than 50 years, the Left in Israel had faced no serious challenge on the plane of ideas. And as most any classic of liberal thought will tell you (but many left-liberals in Israel seem to have forgotten), a dominant party deprived of a worthy opposition to prod and provoke it inevitably grows self-righteous, sluggish, and stale.

The appearance of *The Federalist* in Hebrew also comes at a time when debate about whether Israel needs a written constitution, and if so what kind, has begun to spread beyond the small circle of Israeli academics who had long championed the idea. Many on both the right and the left in Israel share the sense that the political system is in a state of disrepair, too vulnerable to the demands of the ultra-orthodox and to manipulation by tiny fringe parties, haphazard in its protection of individual rights, and unclear about the role of the Supreme Court and the status of judicial review. Given this emerging consensus, it was wise of the Shalem Center to seek out the left-liberal faculties of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv University to co-host the *Federalist* conference. And it was wise of the universities to agree to the project.

More than 600 Israelis—students, faculty, journalists, judges, and senior citizens—attended. The conference, which opened in Jerusalem and concluded the next day in Tel Aviv, was covered by Israeli television and featured in the newspapers. Panels ran the gamut from the diverse historical origins of the thought of Hamilton and Madison to the place of *The Federalist* in the history of political philosophy; from *The Federalist*'s teaching on international law to its opinions about judicial review; from a survey of constitutional experiments around the world to a jampacked final session on the challenge of constitutional reform in Israel.

Of course, the question on everybody's mind concerned the relevance of *The Federalist* to the case of Israel. Opinions differed. The historians, taking a strange pride in the contemporary irrelevance of their knowledge, downplayed the possibility of drawing from *The Federalist* inspiration and insight for today. Those of us with a background in the history of political philosophy insisted on *The Federalist* as a source of both insight and inspiration. Not every aspect of *The Federalist*, of course, is equally enduring. And certainly the American Constitution cannot simply be transplanted to another nation, for institutions must be designed with a view to culture and circumstances. Nevertheless, we maintained that *The Federalist*'s defense of the American scheme of constitutional government will prove relevant anywhere a people, undertaking to govern itself, bases this endeavor on an appreciation of the importance in human conduct of self-interest, a commitment to the political doctrine that all legitimate power stems from the consent of

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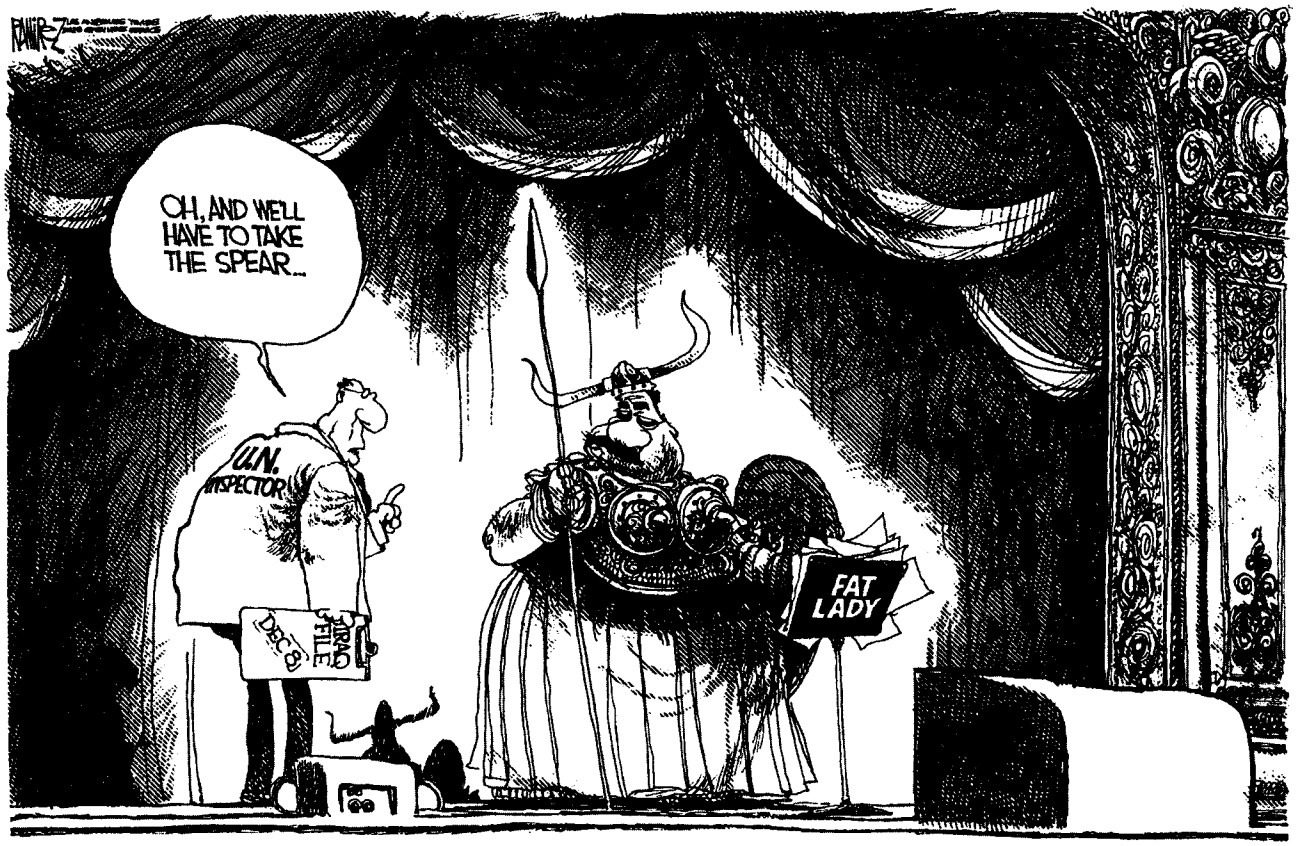
the governed, and a belief in the moral premise of the natural freedom and equality of all.

The speech by Ruth Gavison, bringing the final session to a close, was a highlight of the conference. Small and slight in build, fierce and dominant in argument, Gavison, a professor of law at Hebrew University and a founder of the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, has been a prominent member of the Israeli Left for more than two decades. In recent years she has established herself as a leading critic of the left-liberal activism of the Israeli Supreme Court as well as an eloquent proponent of serious discussion of constitutional reform with various representatives of the Israeli Right about shared values and common goals. Her allies on the left have grown increasingly troubled. As in the United States, the sight of a liberal who respects the people and who embraces not merely the idea of diversity, but the reality of diversity, in particular political and intellectual diversity, can be very disconcerting for those we are generally accustomed to calling liberals. The spirit of Gavison's exemplary liberalism, which permeates her introduction to the Hebrew *Federalist*, was very much on display in her rousing speech to the conference.

Three lessons from her remarks—as it happens, pertinent in the U.S. context as well—stand out. First, democracy has weaknesses and disadvantages, and constitutions should be designed with a view to crafting arrangements, consistent with democracy, to counteract or mitigate those weaknesses. Second, government's first duty, which is the protection of individual rights, is not achieved only by a Bill of Rights. It is also, and perhaps primarily, achieved through artful institutional design, involving mechanisms for the channeling of self-interest such as the separation of powers, checks and balances, an independent judiciary, and systems of representation. And finally, if they are going to be legitimate and effective, constitutions cannot be imposed from above, however elegantly designed, however much they may reflect what some band of professors believes the people would embrace were they to give the matter due consideration. Rather, as the record of 1787 and 1788 suggests, constitutions must be based on actual agreement, hammered out by flesh and blood representatives of the rival and conflicting groups that constitute political society, and ratified by the people.

But as important as what *The Federalist* has to teach about liberal democracy in Israel is what the desire of Israelis on the right and left to learn from *The Federalist* teaches about liberal democracy in Israel. Vigorous public discussion of the principles of self-government is a mark of a liberal democracy's health. It is a cause for admiration that despite the tumult and terror all around, such discussion flows rich and raucous in that small, spectacular sliver of liberal democracy in the Middle East called Israel. ♦



Michael Ramirez

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Going It Together

The Bush administration assembles an ever-larger coalition for war. BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

NOT SURPRISINGLY, top Bush administration officials have no confidence that Saddam Hussein will cooperate with the latest U.N. resolution requiring him to disarm. Any foolish optimism in that regard was dispelled when Iraq continued its longstanding practice of firing on allied aircraft patrolling the no-fly zones and when it submitted a hostile, almost psychotic nine-page letter to the U.N. that left unclear whether Baghdad had accepted the terms of U.N. resolution 1441.

Also unsurprisingly, the same officials have little confidence that the United Nations, Secretary General Kofi Annan, and chief arms inspector Hans Blix will achieve anything in the round of inspections set to begin this week. Already, Blix and his colleagues have rejected President Bush's "zero tolerance" of Iraqi noncompliance, saying it's not their place to make such judgments. No similar scruples kept them from promising Saddam Hussein they would recommend lifting U.N. sanctions if they found no weapons of mass destruction in a year. Kofi Annan, of course, is the author of numerous failed "deals" with the Iraqi dictator, whom he once described as "a man I can do business with."

So it should likewise come as no surprise that the Bush administration is steaming ahead with preparations—both military and diplomatic—for regime change in Iraq.

This despite Kofi Annan's declaration last week that "regime change is not on the table." Asked about the comment, a senior administration official dismissed it with a wave of the hand and a single word: "Whatever."

Reuters Live Photos

"It's the stated policy of this government to have regime change," President Bush declared at a July 8 press conference, after repeated questions about his commitment to removing Saddam. "And it hasn't changed." It still hasn't changed, despite the infrequent use of the locution "regime change" by administration officials since passage of the U.N. resolution. "There have been no changes in policy," a White House spokesman confirmed late last week. "Period."

Senior administration officials insist that the recent softening of Bush's public rhetoric does not reflect a change in priorities—from regime change to disarmament—on Iraq.

In fact, says one, "regime change" is so integral to Bush's thinking, he uses the phrase against advice to avoid it. Last week, in an interview with Czech television, Bush said, "I hope we don't have to go to war with Iraq. I mean, my first choice is not to commit our troops to regime change. I hope Saddam Hussein does what he said he would do, and that is disarm. For the sake of peace, he must disarm."

But Bush knows Saddam will not unilaterally disarm—he could have avoided 11 years of sanctions had he done so after the Gulf War—and the president understands that U.N. inspectors will never truly disarm Saddam without his cooperation. In short, disarming Saddam means removing him. So even as the president plays rhetorically to the U.N. crowd, his administration is moving ahead quickly, not only militarily, but diplomatically, too.

The president's aides are feverishly assembling what Bush calls a "coalition of the willing"—allies who will support the United States even without a second U.N. resolution specifically authorizing force. (Such a second resolution is "not being widely discussed" and is unlikely, says one administration official with knowledge of war planning.) Evidence of this effort is everywhere. The president himself sought support from allies at last week's NATO summit and huddled with Russian president Vladimir Putin on Friday. Meanwhile, Donald Rumsfeld raised the issue in recent bilateral meetings with defense officials in Latin America. And the *Washington Post* reported last week that 50 U.S. embassies sent letters to "sound out foreign leaders about their willingness to participate in military action in the event President Saddam Hussein fails to comply" with inspections. Several top administration officials will be seeking concrete commitments of support

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"Frankie and Johnnie Come Lately"

Frank Lautenberg and Fritz Mondale were Johnnie Come Latelies. The former won. The latter lost. At the end of the day for me, there's the soft pillow for my head and the warm blanket for my heart. I fall asleep. Then I meet the legendary Paul Revere.

"You ask me about Frank Lautenberg and Fritz Mondale," Paul Revere began. "At the last minute, these kind of would be minutemen run for political office. Right?"

"Right," I replied.

"You can call them Johnnie Come Latelies. And so they are," replied Mr. Revere. "You contacted me because I know all about minutemen. I called them to arms, shouting 'the British are coming!'"

"You did," said I.

"Now I get it," continued Paul Revere. "Those two wanted to cash in on my dramatics. This time I'd shout 'Fritz and Frank are coming!' Have I got it?"

"You have," I assured him.

"Well, comparisons are odious. You know what I think?" asked Mr. Revere.

"Please, tell."

"Those two are retreads, or in my day patched-up horseshoes, sort of has-beens. They had their day in the sun. They want to hear me shout 'Fritz and Frank are coming!' like when I called out 'The British are coming!' Am I right?"

"Yes, exactly, Sir. It's like they're cashing in on you," said I.

"It's not even dignified, the two old geezers. I'm on my horse. This time he's not galloping, just an easy trot," said Paul Revere.

"And?"

"Frank Lautenberg won. Fritz Mondale lost. So Mr. Mondale was temporarily on the Fritz as the saying goes. As for Mr. Lautenberg, he won sort of," said Mr. Revere.

"So, what else?" I asked.

"I can see Mr. Lautenberg riding a hobby horse. He's too old to sit a charger while poor old Fritz returns to the stable," continued Paul Revere.

"What else?"

"Oh, you'll see old Frank sort of like Don Quixote tilting at windmills. What did he leave the rocking chair for? Why didn't he step aside for a young John Wayne or a young Clint Eastwood? Young blood is needed, not broken down 'cowboys.'"

"I don't know," said I.

"Neither do I," Mr. Revere went on. "Frank's handlers mounted him on a broken down Democrat donkey. The same with Fritz, only his came up lame. Watch out for Frank's donkey, never called an ass in mixed company, even if he sits on it."

"Gee, Mr. Revere, you seem a little put out," I told him.

"It's not that so much as if the GOP ever settles on 'Johnnie Come Latelies' let's hope they sit a charger, rid us of assorted outlaws and eliminate all bum steers!"

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from would-be allies over the next few weeks.

One important argument U.S. officials will make in asking for cooperation: The war in Iraq is part of the larger war on terror. And just as U.S. allies were free to characterize the terms of their participation in the early stages of that broader campaign, they will be able to do the same with Iraq. Allies who do not wish to contribute troops or equipment to the war in Iraq will likely be asked to step up their participation in other aspects of the wider war on terror.

In New Zealand on Friday, for example, U.S. chargé d'affaires Phil Wall met with New Zealand foreign minister Phil Goff. Goff said the American diplomat came "seeking possible contributions . . . if force is used against Iraq." And while Goff reiterated New Zealand's opposition to military intervention in Iraq without explicit U.N. approval, Prime Minister Helen Clark said earlier in the week that New Zealand would send a naval warship and "patrol aircraft" to the region in support of the ongoing anti-terror campaign. Such aid, of course, will allow the U.S. military to shift resources to Iraq.

What will become increasingly clear in the coming weeks is the hollowness of claims that the United States will be "going it alone" when it intervenes militarily to unseat Saddam Hussein. Allies who have already offered varying degrees of support include Australia, Bahrain, Britain, Bulgaria, Denmark, Italy, Kuwait, Qatar, Spain, and Turkey. Other nations have pledged help, but won't say so publicly until the United States has begun the military campaign. The White House counts 90 nations as active participants in the war on terror. Officials say most of those countries will participate, one way or another, in the coming war in Iraq.

"It's going to be a fairly big coalition," Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz said on Sean Hannity's radio show on Friday, "and it's going to grow over time." ♦

{Advertisement}

Defending Taiwan Through Trade

The business of America is business--so the saying goes. That, of course, is only part of this country's mission. Since its birth in 1776, the United States has also been in the business of supporting and nourishing democracies in every corner of the world.

Trade with China is a controversial topic because of its authoritarian government and human-rights abuses. The American vision and experience, however, prove that liberty eventually wins out over tyranny. Local forces for freedom just need a little boost in the right direction every so often. That's what trade accomplishes: By giving Chinese a taste of economic freedom, they'll eventually demand more political and civil rights.

Nowhere has this been better proven than in Taiwan, where a military regime gave way to a thriving democracy after an enriched population decided they wanted the central role in government. Today, Taiwan's democracy stands as a shining example of what mainland China can be as the economy grows and political reforms take hold. Taiwan is a Chinese democracy.

The catch is that Taiwan has hit a few road bumps. Its economy shrank by almost 2% last year while exports dropped by 17%. Private investment contracted by 27%. Meanwhile, Taiwanese businesses are becoming more dependent on it's belligerent big brother's market, where 23% of all exports were sent in 2001. With this dependency comes vulnerability: China's stated purpose is to unify the island with the mainland on the Communist Party's terms--a prospect which would spell the end of democracy in Taiwan as it would be subjected to centralized control from Beijing.

It's time for a boost from America. Free trade between the United States and Taiwan would give the Chinese democracy an alternative to economic dependency on mainland China by opening up America's markets. The Bush administration is already hammering out free-trade zones with Latin America, Africa and Singapore. The next logical step is a FTA with Taiwan--an ally threatened not only by China's mighty military but its economic march as well.

Capitalism and democracy: The two concepts walk hand in hand. Both are based on freedom of choice. Like trade, neither has borders. Trade encourages, nourishes and protects freedom. A Free Trade Agreement with Taiwan will nourish and protect freedom in Taiwan--China's democracy.

The Committee of Overseas Chinese Businessmen of North America

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When Professors Attack

They make fools of themselves.

BY JED BABBIN

LIKE THE POOR, those who hate the military will always be with us. They believe that America is bad, and that a soldier's only value is as an object of ridicule and scorn. The Vietnam era belonged to them and, even after the war ended, their rants went unanswered. Those of us who wore the uniform in the 1970s were taught restraint, and threatened with courts-martial if we gave in to our instincts to beat the snot out of the ones tossing eggs at us and calling us "baby killers." For the military, the 1960s are over, and those who survived have gone on to real jobs. For the egg-throwers, it's still 1968, and a large number of them have gone on to academia.

The Vietnam era ended suddenly in 1991. America responded to the Gulf War with an overwhelming support for the professional military that had been long obscured from view. America's short-haired epiphany may have come at the instant CNN showed my former Pentagon neighbor, Marine Brigadier General Tom Draude, talking to his troops on the eve of battle. In Tom, everyone saw the smart, tough leader who has always inspired trust and confidence. Tom and his guys were headed to Baghdad at high speed and low altitude when orders stopped them from finishing the job.

Then came 9/11, and the hate-the-military types haven't had it so bad since WWII Hollywood was turning out the "Why We Fight" movies. Instead of Pete Seeger, we have Toby Keith. Instead of frantic civilians catching the last helo out of Saigon, we have Delta Force commandos charging Mazar-i-Sharif on horseback, sitting tall in the saddle. The effeteniks of academia have lived to see the Evil Empire they half-defended fall, and their profanation of the military rejected by everyone except themselves. Their frustration at all this—when it boils over—reveals much about these so-called teachers and the colleges they infest.

Jed Babbin was a deputy undersecretary of defense in the first Bush administration, and is the author of the novel Legacy of Valor.

Kirstein posted the "apology" on his website.

On October 8, Air Force Academy cadet Robert Kurpiel sent an e-mail to several college professors seeking support for the academy's annual assembly, which provides a forum for the exchange of political views. His polite request sought advice on publicity for the event and such. One who responded was Professor Peter Kirstein of St. Xavier University in Chicago. His October 31 diatribe has to be read in full and verbatim:

> You are a disgrace to this country and I am furious you would even think I would support you and your aggressive baby killing tactics of collateral damage. Help you recruit. Who, top guns to reign [sic] death and destruction upon nonwhite peoples throughout the world? Are you serious sir? Resign your commission and serve your country with honour.
>
> No war, no air force cowards who bomb countries with AAA, without possibility of retaliation. You are worse than the snipers. You are imperialists who are turning the whole damn world against us. September 11 can be blamed in part for what you and your cohorts have done to Palestinians, the VC, the Serbs, a retreating army at Basra.
>
> You are unworthy of my support.

Kirstein's barely literate response got around by e-mail pretty quickly. I received it from no fewer than three Air Force pals. Then the media picked it up, and Prof. Kirstein got a flood of protests. In response, he issued what he and his college have falsely labeled an apology. In it, Kirstein says only that he regrets impugning Cadet Kurpiel's character, and graciously accepts *Kurpiel's apology* "for the unwarranted national distribution of a private e-mail correspondence."

About Kirstein's other libels, there is neither apology nor retraction. Kirstein apparently stands by his statements that Air Force cadets are "cowards," "worse than the snipers" (the e-mail was sent a week after the suspected Washington-area

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killers were caught), and that 9/11 is partly their fault. (Both Prof. Kirstein and his boss, St. Xavier president Dr. Richard Yanikoski, declined my requests to be interviewed for this article.)

After the phony apology, the *Wall Street Journal* was willing to declare peace, its November 12 editorial concluding that we have a "happy ending." But it cannot end there, because the real issue is not the gratuitous libels or the resulting outrage. The military community is used to shrugging off such petty outbursts. The issue is whether someone like Kirstein—who is completely immersed in his own political bile—is fit to teach at any college.

Kirstein teaches history at St. Xavier. According to the "teaching philosophy" on his webpage, teachers should express their opinions and "should be free to engage in academic revisionism in their field." That means—in Kirstein's words—that teachers should teach "peace, freedom, diversity . . . and challenge American unilateralism." Kirstein thinks that a professor should "teach what interests [him] even in a required 'core' course." Kirstein's statement on teaching philosophy ends with the rallying cry, "Remember Hiroshima, Nagasaki, My Lai, Kent State, Jim Crow and Selma." Wow. Whatever your college student may be taught in Kirstein's class, it certainly won't be history.

According to *U.S. News & World Report*'s college ratings, St. Xavier is one of the top ten best values in graduate studies in the Midwest. And St. Xavier's president has now moved to defend the school's standards. On November 15, Dr. Yanikoski announced that Kirstein had been relieved of his teaching duties for the semester, and would receive an official letter of reprimand. Kirstein will be kept on sabbatical leave in the spring semester, and his tenure reviewed. Whether the review proves serious or merely nominal will say much about the final outcome. ♦

The Sick Man of Europe Revisited

Don't panic about the Islamic victory in Turkey.

BY GERALD ROBBINS

Ankara

WHEN THE VOTE TALLIES started trickling in from Yozgat, my Turkish colleagues knew that an electoral rout was under way. A mid-sized Anatolian city, Yozgat is Turkey's version of Peoria; whoever does well there usually does well throughout the country. It's ordinarily an ultra-nationalist stronghold, but this year, the Justice and Development party (AKP) was wowing Yozgat with its anti-corruption, reformist brand of Islamic politics. Almost half of Yozgat's ballots were marked for the Islamic party in a multiparty race. The closest challengers barely made double digits.

And so went the November 3 elections in officially secular Turkey—America's closest friend among majority-Muslim countries and a NATO ally since 1952, whose bases and assistance will be critically important to any substantial military operation in Iraq. The Turkish vote was nothing short of a political rebellion—and could be seen as a challenge to the anti-religious tenets of Kemal Ataturk's republic, founded on the ruins of the Ottoman Empire nearly 80 years ago. Should this be cause for alarm in Washington? That would probably be an overreaction.

What surprised pundits and pollsters wasn't the AKP victory but the extent of it. The AKP was expected to win 20 to 25 percent of the vote (the high-water mark for earlier Islamic parties), and then form a coalition with one or more of the secular parties. Instead, with more than a third of the popular vote, it won nearly two-thirds of the seats in Turkey's parliament. Only one other group, the Republican People's party (which Ataturk himself founded), attained any legislative presence.

Gerald Robbins is a writer living in New York City.

What everyone underestimated was the level of popular discontent with a tanking economy and malgovernance. Arguably, the message voters delivered was more populist outrage than fundamentalist yearning. "These results amount to a civilian coup," wrote Mehmet Ali Birand, a well-regarded Turkish columnist. "This is the response given by millions who are saying 'You have failed to listen to me. You have failed to govern me well. You have impoverished me. You have treated me in a condescending manner.'"

Three factors help explain AKP's overwhelming victory.

• *The collapse of the political center.* Turkish voters are a moderately conservative bunch. Approximately 50 to 60 percent usually opt for center-right parties, while the center-left habitually attracts 25 to 30 percent. Throughout the past decade, the former group has been represented by the Motherland party (ANAP) and the True Path party (DYP).

The essential difference between these two bodies was more personal than political. In other words, ANAP's Mesut Yilmaz and DYP's Tansu Ciller can't stand each other. While a merger might have made sense politically, cooperation between the two leaders was unthinkable. Throughout the 1990s, Yilmaz and Ciller accused each other of being corrupt, leading to tit for tat investigations. After several years of such wrangling, a compromise was reached in 1999, in which the two parties

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granted each other immunity from prosecution. The arrogance of this agreement led to a widespread belief that the whole political system was guided by cronyism.

Yilmaz and Ciller should have figured out the consequences of their Punch and Judy show. Over the last decade, ANAP and DYP's combined vote in general elections decreased from 51 percent in the 1991 campaign to just under 14 percent in the recently concluded race. Neither party reached the 10 percent threshold for parliamentary representation. "It used to be that the center right safeguarded political stability within Turkey by accommodating Islamic and nationalist surges either by merger or coalition," observed Sedat Ergin, Ankara bureau chief for *Hurriyet*, one of Turkey's leading newspapers. "The loss of faith in center-right secularism made AKP the only option. If Yilmaz and Ciller had stepped down prior to this election, the political picture would have been different since ANAP and DYP would have restored confidence with new leaders."

• *The sick man of Europe revisited.* Thanks to the worst economic crisis since World War II, this infamous 19th-century description of Ottoman stagnation is suddenly apt again. The economy shrank 6.5 percent last year, with 70 percent inflation and unemployment officially listed at 11 percent but estimated to be twice that amount. According to a survey conducted by Ankara's Middle East Technical University, approximately 10 percent of Turkey's population don't have a regular income. The study also notes that another 25 percent of Turkish society, although drawing a regular paycheck, still live at the poverty level.

In neighboring Greece, the average personal income is $12,000. Turkey's is $1,500. Such figures underscore why—besides atavistic hostility to their majority-Muslim neighbor—the European Union is reluctant to offer Turkey the full membership in the E.U. that it's desperately seeking.

• *The "varoslar."* Throughout a recent stay in Turkey, I constantly heard the word *varos*, which means suburb, and which has taken on a special meaning in Turkey these days. Unlike the American version, which calls to mind Scarsdale and Silver Spring, *varos* signifies a shantytown that has grown up in recent decades on the outskirts of Ankara, Istanbul, or one of Turkey's other metropolitan areas.

Tarik Tinazay / AFP Photo

AKP's Erdogan, flanked by Ataturk

A decade ago, these settlements could be interpreted hopefully, as a jumping-off point for the ambitious poor, full of the promise of upward mobility. The economic collapse of the 1990s doomed such hopes. The individuals who migrated from the countryside to the *varos* during this period found a very different environment than their predecessors. "Back in the '60s, '70s, and '80s, many *varoslar* would receive government amnesties for building on illegal property," *Hurriyet*'s Ergin noted. "Some of these folks even became landlords, cutting deals with contractors for new structures. This outlook has vanished."

Now the *varos* mentality is bleak. The typical resident is underemployed, deprived of basic services, dependent on others, and certain his life won't get better. He lives surrounded by non-descript, concrete sprawl. In Istanbul's far reaches there are reputedly *varos* that the authorities don't even know about, that don't even appear on a map.

The AKP, however, knows these neighborhoods well. Formed just a year ago, it's essentially a grass-roots movement for the disgruntled. The Islamic flavor of the AKP (its officials quote the Koran and pray at mosques) makes the party seem morally upright, in striking contrast to the ANAP, DYP, and the other "establishment" parties, who are derided for not being *candan* ("honest").

The AKP's well-orchestrated campaign doesn't mean that it's an orderly structure, though. Getting the vote out is one thing, managing disparate groups another. The party is presently an amorphous mass of factions united under the banner of throwing the bums out. Even its leadership is up in the air.

AKP leader Tayyip Erdogan, who would be the next logical prime minister, is currently banned from political office for expressing pro-Islamic sentiments as mayor of Istanbul in the mid-1990s. Erdogan's status is under review by Turkey's Supreme Court. And while there are other party officials who are capable of taking the governmental helm, they lack their chief's stature.

In the meantime, Turkey is the promised land for people who dislike American-style incumbent-protection politics. An estimated 80 percent of the deputies in the incoming parliament will be newcomers. Considering the dynamics behind the AKP's rise, it's probably fair to say that this is a reformist work in progress, rather than a blueprint for the imposition of *sharia* on secular Turkey.

Such at least is the postelection sentiment in Ankara. "If we start wearing out AKP from day one, we would be making a big mistake," notes Birand. "We must give it time, wait and see what they want to do, what kind of rhetoric they use, and then we must decide accordingly. We must not set out on a headhunting trip from day one." ♦

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Dartmouth Does Diversity

A bad idea whose time has come . . . again and again and again.

By Heather Mac Donald

The country is on the brink of war, it faces the likelihood of another terrorist attack, and the *New York Times* is worried that Americans are not paying enough attention to race and gender. Two front-page articles on November 12—one on college diversity programs, the other on a golf club's all-male membership policy—offer a stunning demonstration of the loony irrelevance of Howell Raines's *Times*.

The academic obsession with "racial difference" has been an exhaustively documented feature of campus life for over two decades, yet the *Times* offers its story on the alleged necessity of college diversity training as a scoop. The article, "Colleges Find Diversity Is Not Just Numbers," leads with a freshman orientation program at Dartmouth College that focuses on racial difference. The *Times* presents the program as part of Dartmouth's "new push" to "embrac[e] diversity." That "push" is itself part of a broader trend across colleges to respond to difference, announces the *Times*.

It's difficult to know which party suffers from a more severe case of amnesia: the *Times* or Dartmouth. A decade ago, the paper ran an article on the "new freshman orientation . . . in the new world of diversity and multiculturalism." The "new" freshman orientation of 1992 featured programs on racial, ethnic, and sexual difference, premised on the idea that without diversity reeducation, certain college students would subject certain other students to an unceasing barrage of discrimination. The "new" freshman orientation of 2002 features, well, programs on racial, ethnic, and sexual difference, premised on the idea that without diversity reeducation, certain college students would subject certain other students to an unceasing barrage of discrimination. The "new" Dartmouth of 2002 offers staff workshops on "think[ing] of [the college] in terms of classism, racism, and sexism," reports the *Times*. In 1992, Dartmouth required freshmen to attend workshops on "the various forms of 'isms': sexism, racism, classism, etc.," an assistant dean of freshmen told me back then in an interview for the *Wall Street Journal*.

But this dreary monotony is just the point. The diversity industry, of which the *New York Times* is an integral part, perpetuates itself by constantly repackaging as new old nostrums about alleged ethnic friction and its therapeutic solution. However hoary the conceits in the *Times*'s recent college diversity article, it is worth studying in some detail as a textbook example of the diversity industry in action.

The college diversity scam contains four perennial features: (1) administrative deceit; (2) the pretense of acute minority and female fragility; (3) the hypocritical insistence on having it both ways; and (4) assiduous avoidance of the one true difference problem on campus.

Dartmouth's president, James Wright, told incoming freshmen this year that the faculty and administration were "eager" to help them in the "challenge" of transcending "boundaries" of race and class, reports the *Times*. This is pure bunk. If college administrators really wanted to help students transcend "difference," they would stop yapping about it all the time. President Wright made his offer in a speech on "diversity," thus underlining the very differences he claims to want to overcome. Moreover, he presides over an administration and curriculum organized around racial, ethnic, and sexual identity. Dartmouth students will soon be required to take a course in "identity formation."

If university bureaucrats were truly interested in unifying their campuses, they could try a radical experiment: immerse students in the rigorous study of great

Heather Mac Donald writes for City Journal. *Her forthcoming book is:* Are Cops Racist? How the War Against the Police Harms Black Americans *(Ivan R. Dee).*

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John Titchen / Hulton Getty Photo Archive

Diversocrat nightmare: Dartmouth, 1955

works of literature, art, and philosophy, the achievements of science and math, and the history of nations, period. Stop harping on racism and sexism and the "challenges" of overcoming difference. Assume that students actually have the capacity to make friends without the intercession of counselors and diversity deans.

Such a daring experiment will never happen, however. Too many administrative and faculty salaries depend on keeping difference awareness at full boil. Dartmouth, for example, employs separate, full-time advisers to Latino/Latina; Asian and Asian-American; African-American; and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students. Such balkanized advising implies that Asian and black students, for example, don't share the ordinary problems faced by college students—homesickness, loony roommates, or academic overload—but instead need separate counselors who specialize in ethnicity. No wonder the college has convened a "Committee on Civil Discourse," chaired, predictably, by the director of equal opportunity and affirmative action. The committee will "maintain facilitator programs that encourage student interactions"—just what you'd expect in a world where Latino and black students allegedly need color-coded advisers. In such a world, students also need an army of "facilitators" to carry messages across the color and ethnicity line.

The second standard assumption of college diversity discourse is the psychological frailty of non-white and female students. According to the *Times*, an "internal" Dartmouth report (actually produced by the Committee on Institutional Diversity and Equity) found that minority students "felt damaged" by the college. Not just minority students, however. In the hyperventilating style favored by difference ideologues, the report's authors wrote that to hear from "students of color, women of all races and gay, lesbian or bisexual students who felt hurt, unvalued and ultimately less important to the mission of the college than others was searing indeed."

That "others" is particularly choice. By elimination, the only group not feeling pain at Dartmouth, it would seem, are heterosexual white males. The committee could have had the courage to name those insensate boors.

Now, I have never visited Dartmouth, but at the risk of offending its leaders, I will venture the following wagers: That it is as chock-full of kindly, racially "sensitive," well-meaning faculty and administrators as any liberal elite college can be. That the vast majority of its adults are entirely wrapped up in the mission of "diversity" and would like nothing better than to see Dartmouth's minority students succeed. That its student body is friendly and open-minded.

These are fighting words, and will likely provoke outrage from Dartmouth's diversity machine. In defending the image of Dartmouth as "damaging" and in need of further interventions, however, the diversity therapists will have to contend with several awkward facts: Every ethnic group but Caucasians has its own academic department; the college awards honorary degrees on the basis of color, according to its former president; and it woos black high school seniors of middling academic achievement with four-day, all-expenses-paid visits to the campus, complete with tickets to rap concerts and football games, and waives those students' application fees, as the *Times* itself reported in 1993.

As for women and gays, Dartmouth's women's and gender studies department offers them a cornucopia of ego-massaging fluff, courses such as "Here and Queer," "Writing, Eating and the Construction of Gender," "Gender, Space and the Environment," "Constructing Black Womanhood," and "Television and Histories of Gender."

It would undoubtedly be possible to find black and female students who will tell you that they feel "damaged" by Dartmouth. The chance that this feeling repre-

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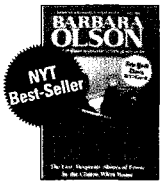

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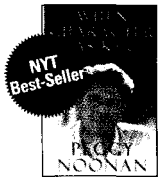

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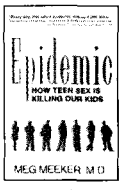

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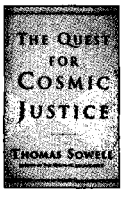

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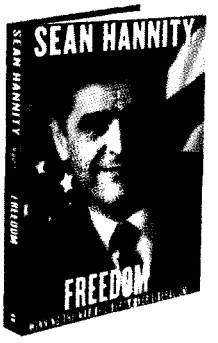

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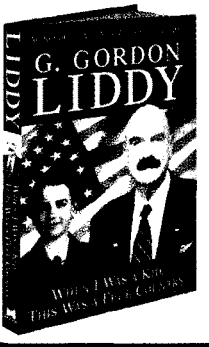

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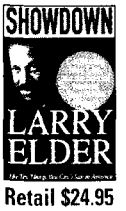

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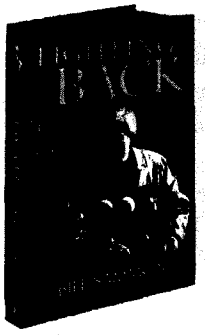

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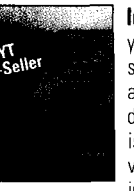

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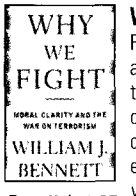

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sents objective injury rather than the eager consumption of academic victimology is almost nil. As Shelby Steele has forcefully observed, the burden of civil rights discourse today is to convince blacks that they are perennially weak, not strong. The same goes for feminist ideology.

The *Times*'s diversity article also presents the third *locus classicus* of academic diversity-speak: the complaint from minority students that they are regarded as group spokesmen. A Dartmouth student tells the paper that she is "tired" of being looked to in class for the "black opinion," and of being perceived as an affirmative action admit.

This is known as wanting to eat your cake and have it too. The founding premise of diversity admissions is that skin color equates with point of view. Universities justify admitting black students with lower academic qualifications than white students on the ground that they are thereby creating a more intellectually diverse student body: A class on European history, argue the diversocrats, would not be complete without black students there to give the "black" perspective on the Peace of Augsburg, for example. Some minority students vocally support this argument. But you cannot demand admission because of your skin color, and then turn around and demand to be treated as an individual, rather than as a representative of your race.

Elite colleges that pay vast sums to try to persuade black students to attend them are criticized as not caring enough about minorities.

As for being regarded as a possible beneficiary of affirmative action, that is the poisonous price of affirmative action itself. Colleges tell the world that without diversity admissions, they would be virtually all white and Asian. Yet diversity deans, as well as many minority students, claim that it is racism, not double admissions standards, that often leads white students to presume that their minority peers have benefited from those double standards. Are there highly qualified black students who would have been admitted under a colorblind system? Of course. But their achievement is tainted by the stigma of affirmative action.

And it is in fact the taboo on acknowledging the effects of affirmative action that is the fourth standard *topos* of diversity propaganda. To the extent that racial tension exists on campus, it is because of unequal admissions and academic standards. But that is the one thing that will never be mentioned in an article on campus race relations, including in the *Times* article.

A bigot could not have engineered a better policy for segregating the races than admitting one race with lower academic skills than the other. The alleged "beneficiaries" of that policy usually start blaming the institution for their feelings of inadequacy and retreat behind a defensive wall. Meanwhile, students admitted under competitive admissions standards see their minority peers not performing as well but sometimes getting special treatment. The administration will then chalk up any resulting tensions to white racism and order up more sensitivity training.

Such a system has one purpose only: to stoke the egos of college administrators and faculty with the fuel of moral righteousness. Architects of academic double standards believe that their liberal paternalism is all that stands between abused minorities and a racist society. As for the recipients of that paternalism, nothing could be crueler.

What desperate fear led the *Times* to run "Colleges Find Diversity Is Not Just Numbers" on the front page? The paper could have performed a great public service by exploring the consequences of academic double standards. Instead, its recycling of diversity pablum suggests a worry that difference ideology may be losing its imperium.

Equally bizarre has been the *Times*'s frenzied daily coverage of the fact that Augusta National Golf Club, host of the Masters Tournament, is all male, as it has been throughout its history. At a time when more women than men attend college, when every profession is not just open to women, but usually aggressively courting them, when the biggest problem for the *Times*'s female readers is how to balance the demands of the executive track with family responsibilities, the *Times* would have us believe that a 300-member golf club in Georgia is a horrific impediment to women's equality.

America's "rights" struggles have come to this: Elite private colleges that spend mightily to persuade black students to attend them are criticized as not caring enough about minorities, while women's groups rally frantically for the "right" to sit in the members-only grill room at an exclusive golf club.

Osama bin Laden and his thugs don't care a whit whether they kill black or white Americans, male or female; they see America as one unified force for evil that must be destroyed. Obviously they're wrong: According to the *New York Times*, only some of us are evil, and you know who you are. ♦

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Fundraising Arizona

We've just seen the future of campaign finance reform, and it's not pretty.

By Clint Bolick

Phoenix

On November 6, when most Americans were awakening to Republican electoral triumphs, Arizonans learned that they had bucked the trend by electing a left-wing Democrat as governor. What produced Janet Napolitano's victory over GOP candidate Matt Salmon in a state with a 3-2 Republican registration advantage was not issues or personalities, but the nation's most ambitious scheme for the public funding of election campaigns—a harbinger of liberal plans for remaking the nation's political landscape.

The future of campaign finance reform is playing out in Arizona, and so far the results are ugly. In 1998, Arizona voters approved by a vote of 51-49 percent the Clean Elections Act, ostensibly to remove special-interest influence from politics by offering campaign subsidies to candidates for state office. The recent campaign—the first statewide election under the Clean Elections regime—proved to be anything but clean or divested of special-interest pressures.

The act skews the political playing field sharply in favor of subsidized candidates. Those who wish to run with subsidies must collect a specified number of five-dollar contributions, ranging from 200 for state legislative candidates to 4,000 for candidates for governor. Once they meet this requirement, subsidized candidates receive a specified allotment for the primary and general elections; and beyond that are matched dollar-for-dollar for campaign spending and independent expenditures by unsubsidized opponents, up to three times a base amount that varies according to the office. Candidates opting out of public subsidies, meanwhile, are subject to a contribution limit of $720 per donor for the primary and general election combined.

Salmon, a former congressman who honored his term limit pledge, refused to accept campaign subsidies. "I have advocated all my life personal responsibility and less government," he explained, so "it would be hypocritical for me to take taxpayer money for my campaign."

But Napolitano, who served as one of Anita Hill's lawyers during the confirmation battle over U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, had no such qualms. As the *Arizona Republic* reported, Napolitano deployed labor union minions to collect the requisite 4,000 five-dollar contributions, then sat back and watched millions in taxpayer subsidies roll in.

Salmon first had to fight a primary against two subsidized opponents. He emerged victorious but broke, with many of his contributors already maxed out under the $720 limit. Napolitano, by contrast, picked up a check for $615,000 from the state the day after the primary, over and above the public funding she had already received during the primary.

The public funds jump-started Napolitano's campaign. While Salmon painstakingly scavenged to replenish his coffers with help from President Bush, his opponent had the airwaves to herself. She used the opportunity to portray herself as a moderate and Salmon as an extremist.

To help bridge the gap, the state Republican party made $200,000 in independent expenditures on behalf of Salmon—but that money was matched dollar-for-dollar by additional subsidies to Napolitano. At the same time, the Democratic party, funded lavishly by developer and state chairman David Peterson, pumped $700,000 into negative expenditures against Salmon—money that did not count toward Napolitano's limit.

For the primary and general election together, Napolitano received a total of $2.25 million in taxpayer subsidies. She outspent Salmon by nearly $1 million. The funding disparity was exacerbated by the enormous investment of time and money—twenty-five cents out of every dollar raised—that Salmon had to make in raising money through voluntary contributions.

A third candidate, the independent Richard Mahoney, collected $1.7 million in taxpayer dollars, to win 7 percent of the vote—or 20 taxpayer dollars per vote. Mahoney

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plowed his subsidies into attack ads, including one implying that Salmon, a Mormon, would be soft on polygamy and another accusing Napolitano of being soft on homosexual pedophiles. The *East Valley Tribune* characterized the negative advertising blitz waged by Napolitano and Mahoney as a "tax-funded mud pit."

The funding disparity between Napolitano and Salmon was compounded by draconian requirements imposed by the Citizens Clean Elections Commission, which has jurisdiction over both subsidized and unsubsidized candidates. Ironically, the reporting requirements are more stringent for those forsaking public funds, who by the end of the campaign must report their spending on a daily basis. Not only do the hopelessly complex and subjective reporting rules entail large administrative costs for unsubsidized candidates, they also tip off opponents to campaign strategy.

Early on, the commission took the sensible position that expenses could be reported as they were paid. But late in the primary, the commission's executive director, Colleen Connor, reversed herself and decided they should be reported as they were accrued. She called a widely publicized news conference to announce an investigation of Salmon's campaign for failing to report expenses as they were accrued, even though most other candidates were reporting the same way. Salmon subsequently was mostly cleared of violations, and Connor confessed that she was "very confused" by her own agency's rules. But by then the damage to Salmon's reputation was done.

Whatever government subsidizes, we get more of. In 2002, fringe candidates came out of the woodwork to collect their subsidies.

With empty campaign coffers and negative publicity coming out of the primary, Salmon faced a double-digit deficit against Napolitano. By Election Day, he had whittled the margin to a single point, in part through television spots criticizing Napolitano for bankrolling her campaign with taxpayer money. But ultimately it proved impossible for Salmon to overcome the rules of the game, which assured Napolitano the victory even as Republicans (with some help from redistricting) were capturing both houses of the Arizona legislature and five of seven congressional seats. The Clean Elections Act had achieved the chief goal of its supporters—electing a governor far to the left of the state as a whole.

Inevitably, the program attracted profit seekers and scam artists. One consultant for former secretary of state Betsey Bayless, who lost in the primary for governor, boasts that Clean Elections funds bought his new BMW. It's even easier to game the system for state legislative candidates, who need collect only 200 five-dollar contributions to open the spigot for tens of thousands in public funds. Repeatedly, candidates collect the money, then hire friends or relatives to run their nonexistent campaigns. A trio of Libertarian candidates for state legislature received $86,636 in Clean Elections funds and lived it up on taxpayer-funded meals at chic restaurants such as Opium, Axis/Radius, and the Ra Sushi Bar.

How did a conservative state like Arizona embrace such a boondoggle? The framers of the Clean Elections initiative knew that voters would never vote for it if they realized they'd have to pick up the tab. Citizens often like the idea of campaign subsidies, but tend to rank them fairly low among competing budgetary priorities. At the federal level, only about 12 percent of taxpayers check off the box designating $3 for the federal campaign fund, even though it costs them nothing extra. Earlier this year, a Massachusetts state court had to order the recalcitrant Democratic state legislature to appropriate funds for its campaign subsidy system. And 75 percent of that liberal state's electorate voted in a November advisory referendum to abolish the use of taxpayer funds for political campaigns.

So the promoters of Arizona's Clean Elections initiative got clever about funding sources. About one-third of the money comes from a $5 income tax checkoff. But unlike the federal checkoff, which merely shifts $3 from one place to another, the Arizona checkoff sends a $5 refund to the taxpayer *and* $5 to the Clean Elections fund. Essentially, it bribes taxpayers to check the box, and each checkoff costs the state $10.

Last spring during tax season, the checkoff was promoted by a $600,000 advertising campaign featuring a cartoon character called "Five Dollar Bill" and characterizing the program as the "fastest five bucks in the state." It was a fast one, sure enough: In a state facing a $400 million budget deficit, millions were being drained for political subsidies.

The other two-thirds of the subsidies were earmarked from two involuntary sources. The first was a $100 tax on lobbyists. But not all lobbyists—just those representing for-profit causes, so that the Chamber of Commerce would have to pay but the Sierra Club and teachers' union would not. The second was a 10 percent surcharge on civil and criminal fines, so that Arizonans who park at an expired meter or get a speeding ticket now are also forced to con-

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Mike Fiala / Photographer Showcase

tribute to candidates not of their choosing.

The Institute for Justice, the public interest law firm of which I am vice president, challenged both exactions in court as a violation of the First Amendment's prohibition against compelled political speech. It's one thing if taxpayers generally choose to subsidize political speech. It's quite another, under the Constitution, if discrete groups are singled out to support speech with which they disagree. For instance, the lead plaintiff, former state representative Steve May, received a parking ticket, some of the proceeds of which were used to fund his opponent's campaign.

Earlier this year, a state trial judge struck down the lobbyist fee but upheld the surcharge on fines. An appeals court unanimously invalidated the surcharge, but that ruling was overturned by the Arizona Supreme Court. The Institute for Justice next January will ask the U.S. Supreme Court to review the ruling, in what could be a major test case on public campaign subsidies.

What are all the subsidies paying for? They certainly haven't removed special-interest influences from politics. A study by the Goldwater Institute, a free-market think tank in Arizona, shows that the voting behavior of state legislators who received Clean Elections subsidies was no different from that of legislators who ran entirely with private contributions. And special interests played a major role in collecting five-dollar contributions to qualify candidates for Clean Elections subsidies, as well as in making independent expenditures. Special interests continue to influence politics, they just do it in different ways—and they will continue to do so as long as government remains so powerful.

Nor was the election "clean"; indeed, Bob Schuster of the *East Valley Tribune* called 2002 the "dirtiest campaign in recent memory." It merely increased the coercive power of government over elections—a frightening phenomenon in a democracy. And instead of private contributors bankrolling negative ads, the taxpayers did.

So what did the dollars buy? For one thing, more politicians. Whenever the government subsidizes anything, we get more of it. In this election, fringe candidates came out of the woodwork to collect their campaign subsidies. Uniformly, they were rejected by the electorate, even as they were siphoning funds from the state treasury.

They also bought a Democratic governor—precisely the goal of the Clean Elections advocates. And the payoff is huge: Not only will Napolitano become the state's chief executive, but over the next four years she will appoint two of the five justices on the state's Supreme Court.

All of this was predictable, of course. The greater the influence government has over politics, the more likely the system is to favor the candidate who believes in bigger government. All of which goes to show that however appalling the current system may be, giving government control of politicians' purse-strings is sure to be worse.

Not surprisingly, the Arizona spectacle has prompted strong calls to repeal the Clean Elections Act. U.S. representative Jeff Flake, a Republican from the First District, announced that he will sponsor a voter initiative on the 2004 ballot to repeal public campaign subsidies. The initiative could shape up as the nation's most important battle over the direction of campaign finance reform.

But before the idea is snuffed out in Arizona, it may spread. A little-noticed provision of the federal McCain-Feingold campaign reform law calls for a study of Arizona's Clean Elections Act. Public financing is the logical next step in the Left's campaign to alter the political playing field. If it can happen in Barry Goldwater's home state, it can happen anywhere—including at the federal level.

The dirty little secret that needs to be exposed about such efforts is that they are designed not to clean up politics, but to secure particular outcomes. At a huge disadvantage will be candidates who believe that in a free society, participation in politics—such as making campaign contributions—should be voluntary, and that taxpayers have better things to fund than political campaigns. The cure, so far, has proved to be worse than the disease. ♦

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Agence France Presse

The White House at War

By Fred Barnes

Let's get right to the scoreboard. The winners in Bob Woodward's account of President Bush's response to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks are Secretary of State Colin Powell, CIA director George Tenet, and, to a lesser extent, national security adviser Condoleezza Rice and her deputy, Stephen Hadley. And Bush himself, who Woodward believes figured out quickly how to be an effective commander in chief.

Bush at War
by Bob Woodward
Simon & Schuster, 349 pp., $28

Fighting Back
The War on Terrorism from Inside the Bush White House
by Bill Sammon
Regnery, 400 pp., $27.95

And the losers, those portrayed unfavorably by Woodward in *Bush at War*? Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Vice President Dick Cheney. Rumsfeld is treated as difficult and cranky and not well liked by the uniformed military. Cheney is the administration's superhawk, and Woodward takes the word of others that the vice president is obsessive about going to war with Iraq. Meanwhile, in *Fighting Back: The War on Terrorism from Inside the Bush White House*, Bill Sammon renders the post-September 11 days as a one-man show. Bush is the hero, playing his public and private roles as a wartime president with skill and compassion.

Publication of any book by Woodward is a major event in the Washington political community—and not only because some top government players are boosted, others not. A question always lurks: Who talked to Woodward? The rule of thumb is that those who talk extensively and leak riveting information come off better than those who don't. Maybe, maybe not. But it's clear Woodward had, in writing *Bush at War*, impressive access to the people he promotes—to Powell and his deputy, Richard Armitage, to Tenet and much of what his agency was doing, and to what went on in the meetings of the National Security Council, the realm of the president, Rice, and Hadley. Rumsfeld and Cheney were less helpful. Rumsfeld provided only an on-the-record interview, according to an aide. Cheney was not interviewed for the book.

There's plenty of evidence of Woodward's reporting prowess in *Bush at War*—the inside details (Bush bench presses 205 pounds), the hidden fears (Bush aide Karl Rove worries Powell is protecting his moderate credentials at Bush's expense), the private conversations ("I hope you'll never lie to me," Bush tells Senate majority leader Tom Daschle on September 12, 2001), the interior conclusions of the players (Hadley "thought" Rumsfeld didn't take the CIA seriously enough), and so on. Woodward, famed for his investigative reporting that cracked open the Watergate scandal, is the best pure reporter of his generation, perhaps ever. He uncovers more things than anyone else in journalism—important things as well as trivial, and all interesting. For example, in *The Commanders*, his book about the Gulf War in 1991, Woodward revealed the strong reluctance of Powell, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Secretary of State James Baker to go to war with Iraq.

But in *Bush at War* there's a glaring omission. Woodward misses the turning point in the war in Afghanistan against the Taliban and al Qaeda forces. It's as though the most important scene had been left out of a movie, say, where Clark Kent turns into Superman. In Afghanistan, it was the moment when the Bush administration decided to abandon its strategy of appeasing rivals of the Northern Alliance, the anti-Taliban rebels, and begin carpet-bombing Taliban troops. The date was October 31, 2001, and within days Mazar-i-Sharif fell in northern Afghanistan, with the Taliban fleeing Kabul a few days later. Soon Kandahar, the Taliban headquarters, collapsed.

The author of the bombing restraint was Powell. He had Pakistan in mind, where President Pervez Musharraf was an opponent of the Northern Alliance and didn't want to see it occupy a large part of Afghanistan. Before September 11, Musharraf had backed the Taliban. So to keep Musharraf on board, American bombers had stopped short of strik-

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ing massed Taliban forces, thus impeding an advance by the Northern Alliance. Not only does Woodward fail to mention Powell's role in limiting the bombing, he also doesn't cite the decision to adopt an aggressive new strategy.

This is odd because the dramatic shift was reported by William Branigin and Doug Struck on the front page of his own newspaper, the *Washington Post*, on November 1, 2001. "U.S. Intensifies Bombing," the headline said, and the sub-headline added, "Taliban Lines Hit After American and Alliance Generals Meet." The story said: "The intense bombing reflected a conclusion in Washington that U.S. military escalation should not be deterred by the failure to assemble a broad coalition of opponents to the Taliban inside Afghanistan, a senior administration official said. Previously, U.S. officials said that air attacks on front-line Taliban troops had been restrained in order not to favor rebels of the Northern Alliance, who are rivals of other potential members of a post-Taliban government."

Woodward notes that initially Taliban forces were off-limits to attacks in hopes they would break with al Qaeda. When they didn't, there was growing pressure to hit Taliban targets. Woodward mentions that Rumsfeld raised the question of these targets shortly after the war began on October 7, 2001. Two weeks later, he writes, the Northern Alliance wanted the Taliban front lines hit before its forces attacked. Later in October, a CIA operative in Afghanistan reported that the Taliban "had never been hit hard" and figured they could survive the American intervention. Around that time, Powell is quoted by Woodward as declaring, "I don't know that the opposition can take Mazar, much less Kabul." But Woodward fails to cite Powell's role in restraining attacks on the Taliban. Finally, Woodward writes that Cheney cited a CIA analysis to the effect the Taliban hadn't been bombed enough. "Do we need more sorties?" Cheney asks.

The answer was yes, though Woodward doesn't mention that such a decision was reached and implemented. The next thing we know it's November 5 and Paul Wolfowitz, the deputy defense secretary, is reporting to the National Security Council that "they were turning up the heat [and] hitting the front lines and troop concentrations of the Taliban and al Qaeda." Four days later, Army Lieutenant Tony Crawford rushes into Rice's office with the news: "Mazar has fallen." The decision to hammer the Taliban—the most critical decision in the entire war in Afghanistan—had worked. And on November 12, Woodward quotes General Richard Myers as saying that in three days the Northern Alliance had gone from controlling 15 percent of Afghanistan to holding half the country.

There's a final point about the gap in *Bush at War*. Woodward mentions that on October 30, 2001, two columns appeared on the op-ed page of the *Washington Post* calling for the lifting of restraints on the bombing. One was by William Kristol, editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD, the other by columnist Charles Krauthammer. Powell's diplomacy was specifically cited by Krauthammer as the source of the restraint. Two days later, a White House aide sent Krauthammer a congratulatory note along with a *Post* story that said a bombs-away strategy had begun. The aide should have sent the story to Woodward, too.

Two portraits in *Bush at War*—of the president and Powell—stand out. Powell, while treated kindly by Woodward, seems a bit full of himself. "Powell's advisers were convinced their boss had clearly provided the margin of victory many, many times over" for Bush in the 2000 presidential race. And Powell appears to have been quite candid with Woodward in revealing his distaste for Bush's intention to take unilateral military action against Iraq if necessary. Woodward reports Powell's thinking: "Going it alone was precisely what he wanted to avoid if possible. . . . He believed the president made such statements knowing they might not withstand a second analysis. Tough talk might be necessary. But it shouldn't be confused with policy. . . . Cheney, in contrast, took Bush at his word."

As for Bush, Woodward casts him as an unusually confident commander in chief from the start. When Cheney suggests someone be assigned to run the war cabinet meetings, Bush instantly responds that he'll do that. Further, Bush knows the military must be prodded to act. He says, wisely, that his job is "to stay ahead of the moment." Bush told Woodward that one of his jobs is "to be provocative . . . to force decisions, and to make sure it's clear in everyone's mind where we're headed." And at war cabinet sessions, while others must explain themselves, he doesn't have to, Bush said. "That's the interesting thing about being president."

I don't mean to give Sammon's *Fighting Back* short shrift. Sammon, the White House correspondent for the *Washington Times* and a wonderful political writer, doesn't have Woodward's breadth of sources or access to CIA and State Department officials (and their leaks). But the book is highly readable and filled with telling anecdotes. Sammon returned to Florida to interview the schoolteacher in whose class Bush was sitting when he learned a second plane had flown into the World Trade Center. When Bush's session with her students was over, he took the teacher, Gwendolyn Tose-Rigell, aside and said he was sorry he couldn't deliver a planned speech at the school. As they talked, "she sensed that a transformation had taken place." She was "astonished by his heartfelt sincerity, especially since Bush hadn't had any private time to gather his wits." The point here is that Bush was calm and composed from the start of his war presidency.

One of the episodes in *Fighting Back* brings back the sorrow of September 11. When Bush landed by helicopter to visit ground zero on September 14, he walked over to greet some firefighters. "When he got to the fourth one—a big, burly guy—the president stopped in his tracks," Sammon writes. "Two enormous tears were rolling down the brute's cheeks. Bush reached up and cupped the fireman's face in his hand. The scene prompted a number of grown men to break down." It would have been hard not to. ♦

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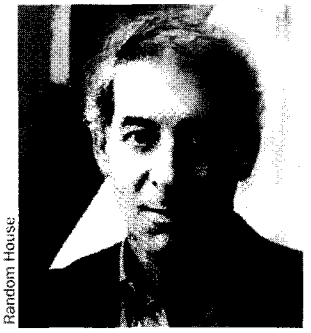
Furst Among Equals

Alan Furst masters the spy story.

BY WOODY WEST

It can be a pleasing happenstance how one becomes acquainted with an author—a book review, an appealing title perhaps, but more often word-of-mouth recommendation. Until a few months ago, I had not heard of Alan Furst. Then within a matter of days, two friends were astounded to hear this. To remedy what apparently was a lamentable oversight, I quickly got a copy of the first novel in his famous series, *Night Soldiers* (1988), and was dazzled. I then raced through his others (the first six are in paperback from Random House), and came up for air just in time to read the latest, *Blood of Victory*. This sort of enthusiasm is not uncommon when one is young, but as the decades mount it becomes rarer and the more gratifying.



Random House

Blood of Victory
by Alan Furst
Random House, 237 pp., $24.95

In the kingdom of letters with its many mansions, Furst is categorized as a "spy" novelist. That's fine, though he rises above his taxonomy just as, say, Elmore Leonard does with his "crime" novels. Furst has been compared with Graham Greene and Eric Ambler as writers of politically sophisticated thrillers, and Furst himself does obeisance to Ambler, particularly Ambler's 1939 novel *A Coffin for Dimitrios*.

All seven of Furst's tales focus on the mid-1930s to the early 1940s, in a Europe sliding chaotically into war. It is of course a landscape ravaged by World War I, the seismic shakings of the Bolshevik Revolution, and the Nazi ascendance that shattered the world. Polyglot legions of émigrés and expatriates swirled desperately across a continent already saturated with both.

Among these scattered souls are Furst's protagonists. Escape from the web of espionage and its frequently lethal undertow is nearly impossible, and their lives are a precarious patch of false identities, false papers, and the corrosive fear of a false step. Betrayal is the environment in which they must try to survive. In this moonscape of dismal and dangerous alternatives there is no predictability or certitude for these fragile pawns of power except that their world likely will get worse.

There are in these novels, as a result, dramatic and tense collisions of events, institutions, and individuals. In one book or another, the reader is immersed in the Spanish Civil War, the Panzer onslaught into Poland, the German invasion of France. The background is suffused by relentless Nazi intelligence operatives, ruthless Soviet apparatchiks, and a broth of covert agencies from every other nation on the continent—all of them willing, indeed eager, to resort to the cruelest expedience because the stakes are so immense.

Furst masterfully differentiates the protagonists in his novels—from the *Mitteleuropa* recruits assiduously trained in Moscow for the cause of international communism, to a Polish army officer, and a Parisian film producer, for example. They all are recognizable on a human scale, as opposed to the one-dimensional characters that often people spy novels.

Furst writes with a vivid sense of place—he lived for long periods in Paris, the city that consistently is the pivot in his fiction. His history is meticulous, research prodigious, and the cultural landscapes have a terrific verisimilitude.

His narratives are disciplined and taut, and he crafts phrases and sentences that chisel into a reader's memory. A young and inexperienced British agent in France (*The World at Night*) on the eve of a dangerous piece of sabotage: "He was scared, but bolted down tight." In Bulgaria in 1934 (*Night Soldiers*), a 15-year-old boy is beaten to death by a gang of fascists whose thuggish leader is known as "a close accountant of small insults."

There's another quality that contributes to this novelist's appeal and that is the chilling climate of a continent that is fast turning into an abattoir. An American must be on the upper edge of the three-score-and-ten allotment card to have personal recollection of that era, even coherent childhood memories—and this country providentially was spared the profound terror that characterized those years for so many; Furst's penetrating empathy and massively organized detail give a reader a shuddering glimpse of the viciousness that infested every moment and disfigured and destroyed so many millions of lives.

The latest, *Blood of Victory*, continues the novelist's excellence (that "blood" is the oil vital to Nazi conquest of Europe). The book's prelude is spare:

> In 1939, as the armies of Europe mobilized for war, the British secret services undertook operations to impede the exportation of Roumanian oil to Germany. They failed.
>
> Then, in the autumn of 1940, they tried again.

The Wehrmacht in this autumn has subdued Poland, and the SS there is eliminating Jews and other proscribed minorities. Hitler and Stalin have signed their cynical treaty, and the Germans are subverting those nations of Eastern Europe that are feverishly trying to avoid the Scylla and Charybdis of alliance or conquest. France is occu-

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pied, with the exception of course of collaborationist Vichy, and British cities are burning from Luftwaffe bombs.

It is late November 1940. I.A. Serebin, a Soviet émigré and writer, is one of those multitudes seeking to avoid the coming fire. He describes himself as "Half Russian aristocrat, half Bolshevik Jew." Two years early, he got out of the Soviet Union half a jump ahead of the purge that would have included him.

He has been a Czarist artillery officer, then a Red Army soldier fighting the Whites, and he fought for the Communists in Poland in 1921. He began to achieve a reputation as a novelist and short story writer and was assigned to Spain as a correspondent for *Izvestia*. Fleeing the Soviet Union, he's found a relatively inconspicuous livelihood as an official of the International Russian Union, an organization that tries to provide social services and community for the diverse populations dispersed across Europe by the savage turbulence since 1917. The IRU tried to "hold tight to the mythical [Russian] center, an ideology of Tolstoy, compassion, and memories of sunsets, and accepted the dues of the inevitable police informers with a sigh and a shrug."

Now, Serebin is aboard a rusty Bulgarian freighter on the Black Sea en route to Istanbul and the IRU chapter there. In a deft Furstian metaphor for the deadly momentum on the continent, Serebin is listening to the radio in the ship's wardroom:

> It produced the transmissions of a dozen stations, which wandered on and off the air like restless cats. Sometimes a few minutes of news on Soviet dairy production, now and then a string quartet, from somewhere on the continent. Once a shouting politician, in Serbo-Croatian, who disappeared into crackling static, then a station in Turkey, whining string instruments and a throbbing drum. To Serebin, a pleasant anarchy. Nobody owned the air above the sea. Suddenly the Turkish music vanished, replaced by an American swing band with a woman singer . . .

The Turkish visit to attend to his IRU chores is actually a cover. He is responding to a letter from Tamara Petrovna, his lost love, but still his love since he was 15 years old and they were youngsters in Odessa; a Red Army nurse, she contracted TB and is now near death in Istanbul.

"Serebin was forty-two, this was his fifth war, he considered himself expert in the matter of running, hiding, or not caring." But the dying Tamara quietly tells him what he knows but wishes not to recognize: "this terrible war. It will come for you. . . . Oldest story in the world: if you don't stand up to evil it eats you first and kills you later, but not soon enough."

With his background, Serebin is of course known to the secret police across Europe. After leaving Tamara, he is steered by a diplomat's wife to a contact with a Hungarian spymaster who is working with the British. He enlists Serebin in the vastly risky, complicated operation to interrupt, even if but briefly, Roumanian oil to Germany. That's probably the best that can be accomplished.

"We don't have to win, we have to play," the spymaster tells Serebin as the operation is launched. "Slow him [Hitler] down—an inevitable problem with supply. Make him think about timing, his Russian invasion, wait for the Americans."

Serebin shortly will find himself on a barge on the Danube on the border between Bulgaria and Roumania (spelled thus on the highly useful maps in these novels). To detail this tense and bloody operation, and the delicate interim arrangements in Belgrade and Bucharest and Paris, would be a disservice. *Blood of Victory* is consistently memorable fiction and, given the ominous givens, has an unusually satisfactory ending.

Alan Furst is a novelist who can keep one reading far into the night. He is worth the lost sleep. ♦

A Wilting Petal

How not to revive the modern novel.

BY MARGARET BOERNER

During the second half of the twentieth century, readers complained that the "postmodern" novel—that dark, deconstructing offspring of the novel as perfected by Henry James and James Joyce—was becoming so stylized, formal, and allusive that it lost its audience. As reading turned into a tedious exercise in symbol scavenging, readers gave up on "literature," and used movies and television to satisfy their hunger for fiction. In the last twenty or thirty years, however, novelists in English have returned to their public and have started giving readers what they had been asking for—novels that are determinedly not symbolic, formal, or allusive.

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Novels now have protagonists who live in a material world and experience events in traditional plots formed by beginnings, middles, and ends. In England, this change has been accompanied by an effort to get rid of novels about "middle-class adultery in the suburbs," as the British designate their much despised novels of the postwar period. Rather than explore contemporary mores, the novel in England turned to stories about the "other"—with all its "race, class, and gender" implications. Such fiction often and quite naturally results in the "historical" novel—set in another country, in the past, or sometimes in the future. The postmodern novel has turned into the "new historical" novel.

Thus, Peter Ackroyd writes about Dr. Dee and Hawksmoor in early modern London and about *Milton in Ameri-*

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ca. John Fowles writes about a Victorian liaison in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, as does A.S. Byatt in *Possession*. Douglas Adams writes about the exploration of Earth by aliens in *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, as does Doris Lessing in *Canopus in Argos: Archives*. Pat Barker writes about a family in World War I. In *Atonement*, Ian McEwan writes about a family in World War II, and in *The Child in Time* about a family on the eve of a possible World War III.

Meanwhile, in a twist of British history dubbed "The Empire Strikes Back," it is often British descendants of colonial peoples who win British awards for their fiction—written in English. Indeed, the most prestigious of the prizes, the Booker, "aims to reward the best novel of the year written by a citizen of the Commonwealth or the Republic of Ireland."

Thus Michael Ondaatje, a Sri Lankan-Canadian, writes about World War II in *The English Patient*. Vikram Seth, born in Calcutta and educated at Oxford and Stanford, writes about a modern Indian girl choosing a husband in *A Suitable Boy*, and about American yuppies in San Francisco (what could be more exotic?) in *Golden Gate*. The Japanese expatriate Kazuo Ishiguro writes *The Remains of the Day* about an English butler in the days of World War II, and *When We Were Orphans* about a child in the Far East during the thirties leading up to the war. Indian expatriate Salman Rushdie writes about the formation of India and Pakistan in *Midnight's Children* and about the formation of Islamic consciousness in *The Satanic Verses*. Listed for this year's Booker are a novel by a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, William Trevor, and another by a descendant of Caribbean immigrants, Zadie Smith.

These two developments come together in Michel Faber's historical novel *The Crimson Petal and the White*, now on the *New York Times* bestseller list, highly praised by a number of critics, and a sensation in London where it was partially serialized in the *Guardian* before it was published this October. *Crimson* was not eligible for the Booker Prize this year because it was published too late, but it fulfills the criteria mockingly set out by Booker judge and professional comedian David Baddiel: "Set it in the past, preferably the 19th century," and "make your narrator an artist, a writer or an academic who can spend a lot of time thinking very deep thoughts about art, writing or academia." And Faber seems almost a multiculti parody of children raised in the shadow of the British empire. He was born in Holland of Dutch parents who emigrated to Australia, where he spent

Harcourt

The Crimson Petal and the White
by Michel Faber
Harcourt, 838 pp., $26

his teens and began this novel some twenty years ago when he was at the University of Melbourne, studying Victorian literature. After graduation, Faber immigrated to Great Britain, where he now lives in Scotland with his wife and her children.

Crimson Petal is the story of Sugar, a prostitute in Victorian London. The book is presided over by an eighteenth/nineteenth-century type of omniscient narrator coterminous with the author, a voice who knows everything about all the characters, what they think and how they feel, including much they themselves do not know about the other characters or even themselves. The narrator invites us to come with him while he lards the book with all the seamy detail of Victorian London that historians in the twentieth century have excavated (and that Faber has swallowed whole hog without much discrimination). Streets filthy with horse manure (so that's what all those child street sweepers in Dickens are doing!); tubercular children begging for food; drunken mothers in St. Giles's Church Lane (what Hogarth knew as "Gin Lane") just south of New Oxford Street, where our heroine is raised; noisome privies; pissing alleys; caustic spermicides; rats, mice, lice, vomit, feces.

The preposterous plot that wanders through this muck involves the dilettante son of a rich perfume manufacturer, William Rackham, who finds he cannot do without Sugar and agrees to join his father in the business in order to set Sugar up in the style which she so richly deserves by virtue of her doing "anything" for her customers. William is married to a wife so sexually disturbed that she will not acknowledge she has given birth to their daughter, and he needs a healthy sexual outlet from a nurturing woman.

To round out the family, Faber gives William a pious, tormented brother, Henry, who battles his sexual urges at exhibitions of (amazingly suggestive, not to say prurient) Victorian nude paintings. At the Royal Academy, Henry hopes that "the other gallery visitors must take him for a connoisseur—or perhaps they perceive perfectly well that he's ogling rose-nippled breasts and pearly thighs." But Henry is an educated man and asks himself what he is "really staring at?"

> A layer of pink paint! A layer of dried oil covered with varnish—and he'll stand before it, for minutes at a time, willing a silvery wisp of drapery to slip from between a woman's legs, wishing he could grasp hold of it and tear it out of the way, revealing—revealing what? A triangle of canvas? For a triangle of inanimate canvas he is willing to risk his immortal soul!

Sugar and William have no such scruples, and during the eight hundred and thirty-eight pages of this overblown novel, we learn that Sugar is just the woman that William should have

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University of California Press

William Hogarth's Gin Lane.

married. But *Crimson Petal* does not end with "Reader, I married him," and William is always the Victorian rich john who would throw her over in a minute were he inconvenienced.

When she first meets William, Sugar is a nineteen-year-old prostitute who was forced into "warming up" her mother's "friends" when she was thirteen. But she is not the usual lower-class type. She is ferociously intelligent and determined. She has taught herself to read, and she can carry on heated discussions about Swift and Shakespeare in an educated accent while engaged in her sex work. A whore with a mind of gold, so to speak.

A proto-feminist, Sugar is writing a novel in which she depicts the awful lives of prostitutes who, like the hero of her favorite Shakespeare play, *Titus Andronicus*, extract gory revenge from selfish clients. But so able is Sugar to deceive a man into believing she is totally sympathetic that she can make his loins quiver with a single glance. They are "naked eyes, beneath a fringe of soft hair, glistening like peeled fruits. They are eyes that promise everything."

And Sugar delivers everything. For not only is she perfectly amiable and responsive to every demand made upon her sexually by William, she makes a businessman of him, though he is "a socialist by inclination." Sugar shows him how the products of soap making and scent bottling can be made fashionable through modern business practices and tactful letters to suppliers. William had generously set Sugar up in her own house in Marylebone with a monthly allowance so that he alone could enjoy her. He gradually comes to depend upon her as a business adviser, so perceptive is she.

But wait! We are only halfway through this book. How to fill the second four hundred pages? To the rescue comes William's crazy wife, Agnes (a lineal descendent of the "madwoman in the attic" familiar from Victorian novels). She has been so repressively raised that she thinks menstruation is a curse for her having been evil, and she does not know she has given birth to her daughter Sophie who is now seven years old and needs a governess. Her cure is attempted by a doctor who is constantly probing her vagina to learn whether her uterus has wandered out of place and thus made her "hysterical." (Has Faber been bamboozled here in his reading about "the other Victorians"?) Agnes is the stepdaughter of an evil lord who has forced her to give up the Roman Catholicism of her dead parents for the arid Anglicanism of respectable London society. How do we know all this? Agnes has kept a diary since her school days.

Sugar is the perfect new governess for Sophie, and at her own urging she soon moves into the Rackham household, where she has a small, cold room and wears virtuously drab clothes. The nastiness of Victorian household life is detailed—one is reminded of the recalcitrant house on the English TV show *1900 House*. But Sugar becomes even more useful as William's business adviser and a real mother to Sophie. Naturally, she is able to educate the child from her own reading—not that Victorian ideas of what young girls should know are particularly ambitious, and Faber has fun with contemporary schoolbooks. Further, Sugar is able to gain knowledge of the invisible Agnes when she rescues the diaries Agnes has thrown into the garden in a rage. Sophie comes to love Sugar, and William comes to need her.

Agnes herself becomes more and more an embarrassment when she ventures into London society, and William guiltily agrees to send her to a lunatic asylum. In the midst of this crisis, William suddenly finds out Sugar is pregnant (by him, of course). He repudiates her immediately, saying she is unfit to teach his child. We are now seven hundred and fifty pages into the book, and this bodice ripper for the chattering classes must conclude. How to end it? Since the author has made his characters completely opaque, we cannot predict, except to be sure that our plucky heroine will prevail.

The solution is nothing short of remarkable. Sugar rescues Agnes from the asylum and Sophie from her new governess, and they all live happily ever after. How this is worked out it would be indiscreet to say. But the usual rules of the adventure story apply. At the end, the narrator cheerily tells us, "It's over." In prose no better than it should be, he hopes he "satisfied all your desires, or at least showed you a good time."

What has happened here? Have we made a terrible mistake in repudiating the modernist novel? Have we encouraged this kind of comic-book adventure plotting? Of course, what Northrop Frye called the "romance" plot, the series of adventures culminating in one big adventure, is everyone's favorite plot and shows up in works from the *Odyssey* and *Huckleberry Finn* to *Star Wars*. But it too easily degener-

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ates into fiction that is all plot, all detail, without any examination of character, let alone symbol, allusion, or organization. It would seem the contemporary historical novel's examination of the "other" merely gives an excuse not to examine ourselves at all.

The most pernicious effect of such a novel as *The Crimson Petal* is that it allows us to feel superior to those in the past without raising up any fear that we might be like them. The "other" is just that—exotic, strange, fascinating, and entirely without relevance to the way we are, merely a mistake our ancestors made. We get a thrill, but little sustenance. Like all fiction, the historical novel needs to hold a mirror up to ourselves. And too few these days do so. Even such accomplished stylists as John Fowles, A.S. Byatt, Michael Ondaatje, Kazuo Ishiguro, and Ian McEwan serve up plenty of trash in their historical novels.

"There is no progress in the arts," declared William Blake, and he was surely right. Milton is not greater than Shakespeare, Dickens than Austen, solely by virtue of having written later. And the contrary is also surely true. Earlier writers did not produce greater works by virtue of living in a golden age in the past when art was uncorrupted. But those who reject the idea of a golden age of the novel must wonder how it is that this important genre now embodies scandal and exhibitionism, not to mention sloppy prose. Henry James, James Joyce, Evelyn Waugh, Elizabeth Bowen—all is forgiven. ♦

Man of War

General George Patton defeats his latest biographer. **BY ROBERT D. NOVAK**

Is there any justification for yet another biography of the much-chronicled General George S. Patton Jr., particularly after the superb *Patton: A Genius for War* by Carlo D'Este (1995)? Certainly not the one supplied by academic biographer Stanley P. Hirshson. Earlier biographers were guilty of "incomplete research," he writes, meaning that he has dipped into previously ignored library boxes. "I especially invite a comparison of the footnotes," urges Hirshson, which sounds like a librarian's view of history.

General Patton
A Soldier's Life
by Stanley P. Hirshson
HarperCollins, 826 pp., $34.95

Footnotes aside, Hirshson urges readers to compare his chapters "on the conflict between tankers and infantrymen in the 1920s and 1930s, on Patton's failure to denazify Bavaria and on the loss of the Third Army and on the struggle over the Patton diary and movie with those in any other book." Those obscure revelations hardly justify the eleven years that Hirshson, a history professor at Queens College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, spent on *General Patton: A Soldier's Life*. They seem niggling attempts to downgrade Patton's towering reputation.

Nevertheless, I waded through this heavy tome, and found it worthwhile for a pair of disparate reasons. Hirshson employs the vacuum cleaner style of biography favored by academic researchers who spew out whatever they find in their library boxes. That results in inelegant prose but also supplies new Patton anecdotes and trivia that delighted me as an unabashed admirer of one of the truly great military leaders in the nation's history. More significantly, this new book teaches, however inadvertently, that irascible, indiscreet warriors are needed in times of trouble. They were necessary sixty years ago, and they may be today.

Stanley Hirshson clearly does not like George Patton, and has diligently sought out the general's many critics (such as novelist John P. Marquand, whose ferocious unpublished attack on Patton even Hirshson labels "unduly critical"). Patton surely is "politically incorrect" for the twenty-first century, but he was also PI for the 1940s.

If the frequently shortsighted George C. Marshall had had his way, the Allied cause would have been deprived of Patton's brilliant leadership because he had slapped two soldiers hospitalized with battle fatigue—and columnist Drew Pearson made it a cause célèbre. Only the good sense of Patton's old friend (and often sharp critic) General Dwight D. Eisenhower saved him from being sent home after the slappings.

If Hirshson had his way, Patton would never have been available for the relief of Bastogne that ranks high in American military annals. Apart from his finding that Patton was not really dyslexic but just a very poor speller, the author appears to value as his greatest revelation the allegation that Patton's ferocious speeches arousing the warrior spirit in American draftees led to the murder of enemy POWs in Sicily. Even though Hirshson fails to connect such a commonplace wartime atrocity convincingly with Patton's rhetoric, he still would have sacked him.

Hirshson also dwells on Patton's anti-Semitism as unacceptable in a war against Hitler. The general's remark during the furor over the slapping incident, overheard by a reporter and included twice in this book (which would have benefited from more robust editing): "There's no such thing as shellshock. It's an invention of the Jews." He described the visiting wife of President Roosevelt's adviser Judge Sam Rosenman as "a very Jewy Jewess." At war's end, he confided to his diary his disgust with the poor personal hygiene of DP's (displaced persons), "and this applies particularly to the Jews, who are lower than animals."

The anti-Semitism of Patton, scion

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HarperCollins

of rich California aristocrats, was typical of his time and caste. It wasn't the virulent Hitlerian strain. Greeting Jewish entertainers who came to Europe during the war, Patton had a wonderful time with Al Jolson and was rumored to enjoy a dalliance with Dinah Shore. The general wrote in his diary: "They have no shame nor modesty and will take all they can get." He was speaking here not of Jews but of the British. The military historian S.L.A. Marshall wrote of Patton that he hated the Supreme Command, the First Army, the Jews, and, above all, the British.

What really seems to bother Hirshson is that Patton was not liberal and did not oppose the economic conservatism of his fabulously rich in-laws, the Ayers of Massachusetts. He writes in the preface: "After the death of his father, a reform Democrat, Patton seemed to adopt the Ayer family's attitude toward labor, race and ethnicity." In fact, the elder Patton opposed women's suffrage and ran to the right of progressive Republican Hiram Johnson in an unsuccessful campaign for the U.S. Senate.

Nevertheless, Hirshson repeatedly returns to this theme, asking on page 705: "How did the son of a Wilsonian Democrat end up a right-wing conservative?"

Hirshson's search into obscure sources found that United Auto Workers president Rolland Jay Thomas, visiting the war zone, was offended by Patton. "I have never heard a man use viler language in my life," the union boss recalled to an oral history project years later. "You're completely brutalized," Thomas told Patton, concluding that the general, "if he had the opportunity, would be violently anti-labor."

Actually, Patton was totally nonpolitical and told friends he had never voted. His patron in Washington was Roosevelt's secretary of war, the liberal Republican Henry Stimson. Patton was entranced by Harry Hopkins, Roosevelt's leftist adviser (and accused Soviet agent). "Hopkins is quite a man," Patton noted in his diary.

Hirshson's vacuum sucks in much favorable comment about Patton, which the historian deserves credit for including in this meandering book. The general's "generosity," "brilliance," and "daring" are noted by several sources. Patton discards the "school solution" taught at U.S. military colleges to voice this doctrine: "My flanks are something for the enemy to worry about, not me. Before he finds out where my flanks are, I'll be cutting the bastard's throat."

He was the U.S. Army's foremost commander in Europe who should have and would have commanded at least a group of armies rather than just one army had it not been for his political incorrectness. When one-third of the German Seventh Army and segments of the Fifth Panzer Army escaped into Germany in the late summer of 1944, British general Brian Horrocks asserted "few Germans would have escaped if [General Omar] Bradley had not halted Patton's northerly advance." Beyond tactics, Patton, whose profane rhetoric so upsets Hirshson, was an incomparable troop leader. "The more I can excite my own people to be alert and kill, the fewer men I am going to lose," he explained. In 1930, he had written: "Wars are fought with men, not weapons. It is the spirit of the men who fight, and of the man who leads which gains the victory."

"Geez, he looks like a general!" exclaimed one of his soldiers as Patton boarded a troop ship en route to the invasion of Sicily. Tall, blond, handsome, athletic (he was a 1912 Olympian), wearing ivory-handled pistols, immaculately groomed in his stylized uniform, he was an awesome sight. He required his officers and men to wear steel helmets, neckties, and shined boots into combat and to wash their socks nightly (which radically reduced trench foot in Patton's units).

Paul R. Allerup, who served in the Third Army for two years in Europe, recalled that three men were put in the stockade after their unpressed trousers did not pass inspection following the capture of the Erlangen tank center deep in Germany. Allerup added: "The Third under Patton was probably the cleanest, neatest army that ever fought a war. Patton saw to that. And I've always believed that was one of the reasons it was such a damn fine army. We hated the rules. But we never lost a battle."

Fellow historian Douglas Porch, in a *Washington Post* review, says "the inescapable conclusion of Hirshson's spirited biography is that we could have won in Europe without him." Yes, but it would have been much harder, and, indeed, it would have been easier had he been used more fully. Much as he dislikes him, Hirshson is moved to write of Patton's death in a European auto accident after the war ended: "Gen. Patton was sleeping forever in the Europe his military genius had helped free."

After I finished reading this biography, I mentioned to a three-star Army general my conclusion that George Patton not only would be considered politically incorrect today but was politically incorrect in his own time.

My companion is an illustrious combat leader of the type brought to the Pentagon by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to replace the politicized generals of the Clinton era. He paused for a moment, then said simply: "Patton is my idol and role model." With all the overwhelming U.S. technological superiority, that warrior spirit may yet be needed. ♦

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Working Mothers

Allison Pearson's novel of a woman who wants to have it all. BY MEGHAN COX GURDON

2:11 P.M. Am typing frantically while toddler with bronchitis lies on sofa, pale and hollow-eyed, watching Barney give big hugs to special friends on TV. Sleeping baby in curtained-off nursery is just beginning to emit marsupial waking-up noises—hurry! Get this written! Decide to wait until baby reaches max volume before turning off laptop. Sick toddler won't mind the noise, probably too sick to notice. Glance at watch: One hour until I need to fetch other two children at school. Outside window, see purple clouds gathering, obliterating sun, dooming plans to take all children to park to kill time and blow off steam before supper ordeal.

Remember doctor saying to keep sick child indoors. Remember brand new birthday scooter, given this morning to six-year-old. Decide toddler will survive short trip to wind-buffeted, rain-soaked park. Baby wails now gently moving curtains. Think, Meghan, think. Deadline for book review horribly soon. It's for WEEKLY STANDARD, so must be witty, conservative (smile: like self), yet also sober, insightful (frown: unlike self). Make mental note to defrost salmon fillets, buy dental floss, call realtor about proper Washington house. Now, what to say about Allison Pearson's novel *I Don't Know How She Does It*?

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Knopf

I Don't Know How She Does It
The Life of Kate Reddy, Working Mother
by Allison Pearson
Knopf, 352 pp., $23

Well, one thing I can say with iron certainty is that after reading Pearson's book, I find her writing style has leached alarmingly into my own (see above nonfiction paragraphs). Or perhaps it's more that her breakneck, scatterbrained, caffeinated narration of a working mother's life is actually not far off the pace of any mother's life, and that taking care of my own four children is sufficiently demanding and chaotic to translate smoothly into Kate Reddy-speak.

As alert readers probably heard during the recent Allison Pearson media-flurry, Kate Reddy is the Bridget Jones of working mothers, and *I Don't Know How She Does It* is the diary-like account of Miss Reddy's bruising odyssey through a crucial, pivotal year. If Bridget Jones articulated the amusing horrors of boozy spinsterhood, Kate Reddy does the same for mothers who work, as the quaint phrase has it, "outside the home."

Kate Reddy is not merely a working mother, but a full-time, top-level, frequent-flying execu-babe in a merciless male-dominated industry. The first woman to become a fund manager for a white-shoe London investment firm, she's married to a handsome upper-middle-class architect and lives in a large-and-crumbling-but-aesthetically-decent Victorian house in an unspecified part of London that I'd bet is Islington. Kate is thirty-five, good-looking (though still carrying a bit of baby fat), and the mother of Ben, one year, and Emily, five. And her life is one, long, rolling disaster.

Her life, a year of it, is also sparklingly narrated and vastly entertaining, in a crazed, wince-making, headlong way. She is forever running late, forever thinking up excuses, lies, and evasions to fool her daughter, her bosses, her husband, the nanny, her friends. She's forever juggling dozens of tiny, maddening bits of information, of which any one—the birthday cake that must be bought, the stair carpet that needs repairing, the shares she must cash in—if forgotten, has the power to unleash further catastrophe and unhappiness, necessitating yet more lies and making her even later for whatever is next on the schedule.

And beneath it all, always, throbs the drumbeat of maternal guilt. She loves her children, but, frankly, she hasn't time.

> I have tried to explain to my daughter why Mummy has to go to work. Because Mum and Dad both need to earn money to pay for our house and for all the things she enjoys doing like ballet lessons and going on holiday. Because Mummy has a job she is good at and it's really important for women to work as well as men. Unfortunately, the case for equal opportunities, long established in liberal Western society, cuts no ice in the fundamentalist regime of the five-year-old. There is no God but Mummy, and Daddy is her prophet.

A few years ago, during the so-called Mommy Wars (a phrase never uttered by any actual mother, as far as I can tell, but popular with reporters and editors), society was mildly convulsed over the proper role of women with young children: Whether they should work, stay home, go flex-time, get on the Mommy Track, take unpaid leave, or put in even longer hours and make partner so their own girls would learn to be Women in Their Own Right. My impression is that this convulsion has eased. The flex-time-stay-at-home-as-much-as-possible argument has won, and the popularity of this novel confirms it. At last look, *I Don't Know How She Does It* was seventeenth on the *New York Times* bestseller list, and you can bet it's not

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selling to the "my children are happier because I work" brigade.

For though Kate Reddy may lie to everyone around her, she doesn't lie to herself; she sees with brutal clarity what her insistence on working costs her children. It's a reality that will be icily familiar to any besuited mother who has pushed her crying children back through the doorway so she can dash to a waiting taxi. "During the hours and days after I first get back from a trip, I always promise myself it's my last time away," Kate Reddy admits.

> The story I live by—that working is just a range of choices I could make that will not affect my children—is exposed for what it is: a wishful fiction. Emily and Ben need me, and it's me they want. Oh, they adore Richard, of course they do, but he is their playmate, their companion in adventure; I'm the opposite. Daddy is the ocean; Mummy is the port, the safe haven they nestle in to gain the courage to venture farther and farther out each time. But I know I'm no harbor; sometimes when things are really bad I lie here and think, I am a ship in the night and my children yell like gulls when I pass.

It's hard to imagine Alfred A. Knopf wanting any part in popularizing these sentiments even five years ago.

The story line is straightforward and squared-off (if not already a screenplay, it will certainly become one: You can spot cinematic grammar in the regularly placed plot points), which is amply forgivable in a light novel that is really about the emotional quandary that ambitious modern mothers are in.

And though the central turning point is predictable, it's also wrenching enough to produce tears. It involves a delightful woman who, amazingly, is *not* conflicted about work, but embraces a life caring for her husband and three sons. Readers will want to smack the callow career gal who dismisses this woman thusly: "I mean, what a waste to end up doing nothing with your life."

If some books are meant to be chewed, and some devoured, this is a novel to be guzzled like a large frothy glass of chocolate milk. It's definitely a "chick's" read, and it's often laugh-out-loud funny; any woman who has ever lived with a man (especially an Englishman) will find many amusing masculine quirks from her own experience replicated in Kate and Richard's marriage. To wit:

> "There are certain words a grown man cannot be expected to say, Katie, and Kitten Soft are two of them."
> "You won't say Kitten Soft Kitchen Roll?"
> "Not out loud, no."
> "Why on earth not?"
> "I don't know. I just know I'd rather eat a soft kitten than ask for one. Even thinking those words…"
> For future reference, I ask my husband to give me some other words grown men cannot be expected to say. In no particular order they are: Toilet Duck, glade-fresh, rich aroma, deep-dish, filet o' fish, Cheezy Dipper, wash'n'go, Bodyform, Tubby Custard, panty liner.

I tried this on my own husband. It's true: They can't do it. ♦

Tartted Up

Donna Tartt proves that even the pretentious can have real talent. **BY KANE WEBB**

No one seems able to talk about Donna Tartt's new novel, *The Little Friend*, without talking about Donna Tartt. Take a look at the magazines with her picture on their covers and the adoring photo portraits run by *Vanity Fair*. Or watch the author's obsessive readers—the kind who create such websites as "The Donna Tartt Shrine" and wait in long lines at book signings for a chance to learn every detail about their rock star of an author.

Even reviews of her book tend to become a fashion show. There's something in the air around Donna Tartt which compels me to report that—at our recent interview—Tartt wore a long black skirt and matching black jacket; a white, high-collared shirt and dark-blue tie knotted against her neck; and, loosely on her wrist, an antique-looking watch. (Not an heirloom, just old, she said, adding: "It glows in the dark.") Her straight, black hair was cut short in what the fashionistas might call a pageboy style—exactly the way it's been portrayed on the cover of the *New York Times Book Review*. And *Book* magazine. And *Poets and Writers*. And in that glamour spot for *Vanity Fair*.

Kane Webb is assistant editorial-page editor at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.

At our lunch in Memphis's Peabody Hotel, she had soup and mineral water and spoke in an engaging, friendly voice that ages into expatriated southern as the afternoon lumbers on. Her eyes glow light green—just as it says in all the profiles. She tends to close them when she's making a particularly dear point. She says "you know" a lot. She's unfailingly polite, witty, attentive, and would have snagged the check had I not been so quick on the draw.

There. Now we can get on with the book. To borrow a page from both of Tartt's novels and reveal the crime straight up, *The Little Friend* is better than *The Secret History*, her debut novel, which was published when she was twenty-eight and launched a thousand rumors. Her new book comes to us ten years after her premiere, and it shows. Donna Tartt has matured.

Like her first book, *The Little Friend* revolves around the aftermath of a murder. Harriet Cleve Dufresnes is in diapers when her brother, nine-year-old Robin, is found hanging from a black tupelo tree in the family's backyard. The crime never gets solved. Not even a suspect. Authorities eventually write it off as the grotesque work of a vagrant.

After the death of Robin, the Dufresnes family fractures. Harriet's

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father takes a job in Nashville, and her mother descends into a kind of fugue. Harriet and her older sister, Allison, grow up largely under the supervision of the family maid, an indomitable grandmother, and three semi-doting aunts. When those women aren't around, which is often, the Dufresnes girls are on their own. Especially little Harriet.

Lacking parental guidance and reared on such books as *Treasure Island* that she takes as gospel, Harriet gives free rein to her imagination. At age twelve, she becomes consumed, in a school-project sort of way, with the notion that she should solve her brother's murder—with the minimal aid of her best friend and partner-in-crime-solving, an eleven-year-old boy named Hely. (What Harriet sees as a crusade Hely sees as a rollicking good time.) The prime suspect, in Harriet's mind, quickly becomes a member of the "country sorry" Ratliff clan. The Ratliffs' main preoccupation is manufacturing methamphetamine. And for much of the novel, the story unfolds through the eyes of either Harriet or the Ratliffs, who represent two distinct southern types: a prominent, old-monied, proud family in decline and a lawless, squalid, proud family going nowhere. The Compsons and the Snopeses.

Both *The Little Friend* and *The Secret History* are, as Tartt laughingly puts it, "about kids who read too much." *The Secret History*—a tale of murder, cover-up, college kids, and reading—succeeded as both story and literature in daunting circumstances: It was a first novel; it was a dense, often digressive book compared with such minimalist peers as *Less Than Zero* and *Bright Lights, Big City*; and it faced the enormous task of living up to its own hype.

Donna Tartt labored for almost a decade on *The Secret History*, which finally came out to much fanfare in the fall of 1992. Tartt had begun the book as a student at Bennington College in Vermont—but the Tartt legend goes back to her freshman year at Ole Miss in Oxford, where she submitted a few stories to the school paper, which fell into the hands of faculty member and local literary god Willie Morris.

The story goes that the late author and editor of *Harper*'s spied Donna Tartt one evening at a Holiday Inn bar off the Oxford town square. Acting on the knowledge that this pixie-sized co-ed was indeed the young writer he'd come to admire, good ol' Willie introduced himself with a dramatic and portentous flourish: "My name is Willie Morris, and I think you're a genius."

Knopf

The Little Friend
by Donna Tartt
Knopf, 480 pp., $26

Morris encouraged Tartt to leave Oxford for Bennington, where she met Bret Easton Ellis. Another bit of good fortune. Ellis would soon make a splash with *Less Than Zero*, and, when Donna Tartt finished her first novel, he shepherded it along to his New York super-agent, Amanda (Binky) Urban. The rest is pop history: The agent loved the book, set off a bidding war, and secured for Tartt a $450,000 advance and a half-million dollars for the paperback rights. Film options, foreign sales, more press than any southerner this side of a certain Arkansas governor—it all helped to create the Donna Tartt phenomenon.

Perhaps the biggest surprise was that the book lived up to its hype. *The Secret History* introduces the reader to an exclusive group of privileged classics students at a small college in Vermont. The students enact a bacchic ritual that leads first to an accidental murder and then to a murder of one of their own to cover up their tracks. The book has its problems. The second half sags, and the characters aren't richly developed. (One could accurately describe them as bored white snobs.) But there's no denying *The Secret History* is a page-turner with depth. It also contains one of fiction's great opening lines: "The snow in the mountains was melting and Bunny had been dead for several weeks before we came to understand the gravity of our situation." More than all that, the book seemed a harbinger of great things to come from its young author.

But then came the decade-long wait for her second novel. Marc Smirnoff, editor of the *Oxford American*, notes that Donna Tartt has hardly been inactive, publishing fiction and nonfiction in *Harper's*, the *New Yorker*, *GQ*, and in his own magazine. "What's mesmerizing about them, besides their subtlety and eloquence," he says, "has been their variety and reach. Such quality is harder to pull off than cranking out mediocre books. I say we're better off with fewer books but better ones."

The Little Friend is set in the fictional town of Alexandria, Mississippi, a creation of Tartt's built from parts of Oxford, Greenwood, and perhaps her hometown of Grenada. "The town itself can be a character," she told me. "It can be an engine powering the story." Alexandria is filled with the kind of characters that anyone who's lived in the South will recognize: the Ratliffs; Gum, the Ratliffs' grandmother and perpetually dying freak of nature; the Cleve sisters, a group of strong women who make up the matriarchal society that dominates the story; the spooky, snake-handling preacher; the smarmy car salesman; the underpaid, under-appreciated, under-educated black maid who's the real mother to the privileged white children under her care.

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CORBIS

If such characters seem somewhat stock, they're also accurate. Mississippi in the 1970s was actually like this. And then there's the irresistible Harriet. If she's not an original figure in American literature, she's still great fun. "Harriet is very narrowly focused," Donna Tartt says. "She's very obsessive. She thinks that putting these nineteenth-century templates of honor on her own life, this is how to solve it. This is how to make things right. It's like a novel. It's like a story for her. And she doesn't understand yet that life is not a story."

Readers will detect in Harriet a bit of Scout Finch from *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and maybe a bit of Mattie Ross from Charles Portis's *True Grit*, especially in her independence and single-mindedness to see justice done. When I mention this to Tartt, she doesn't cringe exactly but answers, "Scout is a real sweet, innocent child. She doesn't really have a personality like Harriet at all. Scout is not going to try to kill someone. Do you know what I'm saying? Mattie Ross. . . . I loved her. If you ask me, Charles Portis is the greatest living, unsung American writer."

Even if Harriet is part Scout, part Mattie Ross, and part Donna Tartt, she's memorable enough to haunt your dreams. Which is one reason *The Little Friend* does, too. Little Harriet is a girl we all would have fallen for at eleven—just as her friend Hely has:

> There were plenty of girls at school prettier than Harriet, and nicer. But none of them were as smart, or as brave. Sadly, he thought of her many gifts. She could forge handwriting—teacher handwriting—and compose adult-sounding excuse notes like a pro; she could make bombs from vinegar and baking soda, mimic voices over the telephone. She loved to shoot fireworks—unlike a lot of girls, who wouldn't go near a string of firecrackers. She got sent home in second grade for tricking a boy into eating a spoonful of cayenne pepper; and two years ago she had started a panic by saying that the spooky old lunchroom in the school basement was a portal to Hell.

The Little Friend is a murder mystery, a coming-of-age novel, and a period piece, all wrapped together—which makes it sound, on its face, as though it were just another southern novel with all the usual themes. Despite the media's fascination with a "New South," we don't really do new in the South. So the writer who accepts the challenge of setting a story in Mississippi faces the near impossible task of telling an old story in a different and interesting way.

It takes a rare talent to pull off that trick, but Donna Tartt manages. She tells a good story, she crafts a fine sentence, she develops her characters, and, more than all that, she has that ability to turn her readers into addicts. A typical Tartt junkie will have a reaction similar to the one I got from a colleague, who said of *The Little Friend* that "it makes me wish she had, like, five more books." Donna Tartt's image, her pretension, the mysterious gap between novels, the whole ball of publicity wax, just provides the addicts another hit. My experience interviewing Tartt forced me to the uncomfortable admission that an author can be pretentious and still substantive and talented. Even worse, that she may not be as pretentious as her carefully crafted image would have you believe. After an afternoon with Tartt, I worried that I was at risk of losing a most cherished prejudice.

When we finished the formal interview-lunch, we headed out for a second, more casual round at a popular bookstore in Memphis called Burke's. Donna Tartt sat alone in the backseat while her publicist drove down Poplar Avenue and I rode shotgun—with Led Zeppelin screeching and groaning its way through a cut from the album *Physical Graffiti*. "Ratliff music," says the publicist, Paul Bogaards (laid back, friendly, and inconspicuous enough to give New York literary types a good name). Bogaards thought it'd be fun to listen to some Ratliff music as he and the author made the trip up from Oxford to Memphis.

So we're all unintentionally bobbing our heads, 1970s burnout style, as we tool along in suits and ties, when Donna Tartt leans up on the front seat and points out a record store called Pop Tunes, where, legend has it, Elvis used to shop. "That's where I bought my first Sex Pistols record," she says, detouring the conversation to punk rock. And suddenly Donna Tartt is the girl you knew in college. She talks about how disappointed she was in the movie *Sid and Nancy*, about the Sex Pistols' drug-addled guitarist and his girlfriend. Courtney Love would have made a much better Nancy, she says. Then she remembers, in a kind of eureka moment, that one of her favorite books as a teenager was *And I Don't Want to Live This Life* by Nancy's mom, Deborah Spungen.

"I bought it at the Piggly Wiggly," she says proudly. She's like this all the way to the bookstore—and I could suddenly see that she must have been just like Harriet as a child. Charming and funny and smart and brave. The kind of girl who could compose adult-sounding excuse notes and make bombs from vinegar and baking soda and mimic voices over the telephone. The kind of girl who could trick us all into eating a spoonful of cayenne pepper. ♦

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GOP ♥ NEA?

On November 14, after a delay of nearly nine months, the Senate confirmed the appointment of David Gelernter to serve on the National Council on the Arts. A painter, writer, and computer-science professor at Yale (to say nothing of his being a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD), Gelernter brings important gifts to the council, which acts as the advisory board for the National Endowment for the Arts.

President Bush's first chairman of the NEA, Michael Hammond, died suddenly on January 29, six days after taking office. One can see why, in the months that followed, Republicans made little progress toward defining a public art policy. There was, after all, a war going on, and the White House had other priorities. But the announcement on October 22 that Bush had chosen the poet Dana Gioia as Hammond's replacement signaled things were moving again. If the Senate acts quickly to confirm Gioia as chairman of the NEA in the new year, we should see . . . well, what should we see? What ought the Bush administration to be doing about the arts?

The new chairman of the NEA faces real problems. A recalcitrant bureaucracy, protected by the civil-service system, that has long conceived itself a bastion of liberal sanity among Neanderthal conservatives. A mainstream media so distrustful that most arts reporters believe anyone Bush appoints must be merely a placeholder, or even an active underminer, until the Republicans muster the political will to abolish the NEA. An art world dominated by the likes of Amiri Baraka, the poet laureate of New Jersey—and declaimer of such lines as "Who told 4,000 Israeli workers at the Twin Towers to stay home that day?"

The NEA's relations with conservatives aren't all that great, either. The split between wealthy Republican donors and grass-roots Republican voters is measured not just by issues such as abortion but by support for the established museums and orchestras—most of which have agendas these days unpalatable to the people who just gave Bush a midterm election victory. Meanwhile, the NEA has acted for several years as though its primary mission were to get itself ignored, running a communications office that seeks mostly to suppress information.

That's perhaps reasonable, given the endowment's lack of direction; if you haven't got any governing philosophy, the best thing may be to hide the fact. But the result has been the alienation of the conservative press, which now carries arts news mostly for the comedy. Thanks to ideologically motivated leaks from the NEA's bureaucrats, the hard news about the endowment is reported primarily in the left-leaning arts pages of the *New York Times*. It won't be enough for the new chairman of the NEA to do great things. Whoever Gioia finds to act as communications director is going to have to mend a lot of fences with the conservative press, convincing the *Wall Street Journal*, *National Review*, the *New Criterion* (and, yes, even THE WEEKLY STANDARD) that the NEA has a sensible philosophy for public art—and is willing to do the work to have that philosophy issue in results.

Fortunately, Dana Gioia is capable of accomplishing that. He is a major figure in American letters, experienced in business, and a man with a passion for great art. And the press Gioia has so far received has been astonishingly favorable. A November 2 editorial in the *New York Times* suggested that "Gioia may be just the person to begin leading the NEA back to its original mission." The *Times* meant by that the refinancing of individuals such as Karen Finley, famous for dowsing her naked body in chocolate sauce to the delight and delectation of college audiences everywhere, but at least the paper wasn't attacking Gioia.

The most negative comment in the *Times*'s October 28 profile of the poet was a prediction that conservatives in Congress would find something "sinister" in the libretto he wrote for the opera *Nosferatu*—which is, in fact, an astonishingly direct Catholic work, featuring a heroine who calls (in Latin) upon the Blessed Virgin to help her get the vampire spiked.

If this is the worst Gioia faces, he's in the clear, and—together with a National Council on the Arts that now features David Gelernter—he can begin the work of forming a serious policy for the NEA.

—J. Bottum

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The *Today* show

NBC News Transcripts

November 22, 2002 Friday

AL GORE SEGMENT

COURIC: We're now joined by former Vice President Al Gore, who has written a new book, *Joined At the Heart: My Love Affair with Myself*. Good to see you again, Mr. Vice President.

GORE: Thanks. I wish I could say that it is good to be here, but when you have an administration that is conducting the most disastrous economic policy since Nero, that has lost every battle in the war on terror, and that, with its corporate cronies, is raping the environment and starving our children, it is hard to feel good about anything.

COURIC: It sounds as if you are running for president.

GORE: I haven't made that determination. But if I do, I will speak from the heart and let the chips fall where they may. I will leave no stone unturned even if it means breaking a few eggs along the route.

COURIC: You'll be running as the mixed metaphor candidate?

GORE: I've decided to reinvent myself as a sincere person. We've done some focus groups and we've got several spontaneous, from-the-heart events planned over the next few months. This book tour and coming-out campaign is part of that spontaneous, unscripted strategy.

COURIC: And you've taken some daring policy positions.

GORE: Yes, I've reluctantly concluded that in order to address the problems facing this nation, we will have to establish a dictatorship of the proletariat, nationalize the means of production, and establish Communist party dominance over all aspects of national life.

COURIC: Some are calling this a shift to the left.

GORE: I reject those old labels of left and right. I see this as a spontaneous Stalinism for the twenty-first century or a pragmatic totalitarianism of the heart. You see, one of the things people don't understand is that I actually won the last election. I received 57 percent of the vote, and, if you add up the electoral votes a certain way, I got a clear majority. Before the Supreme Court intervened, you see, something very interesting was becoming clear in Florida. . . .

COURIC: Thanks for being with us, Mr. Vice President. Next on *Today*: women who shave their legs too often. We'll be right back after these messages.

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The Revolution in Air Travel

Robert E. Hall is the Robert and Carole McNeil Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution and a professor of economics at Stanford University.

A visit to JFK airport is a poignant illustration of the transformation sweeping U.S. air travel. The beautiful TWA terminal is silent, boarded up, surrounded by ugly chain link. United's old terminal now bustles with passengers on JetBlue. Wall Street thinks the traditional airlines are jokes—United's market capitalization is only $146 million, compared to $10.6 *billion* for Southwest.

Airlines operating under the old model say they just need givebacks from their highly paid employees to stay in business. But that claim understates their economic plight. In the most recent quarter, United reported an operating deficit of 13 percent of its revenue. United deploys airplanes and other capital worth about $21 billion. To retain that capital, United needs to earn a profit of 11 percent of its revenue. Thus, its economic deficit is not 13 percent but 24 percent. United's payroll is 47 percent of its revenue. So the employees would have to give back more than half their pay to make United viable in the longer run. That's most unlikely to happen. United needs a radically new model.

When the traditional airlines compete with JetBlue and other airlines operating under the new model, they accept fares that fall short of costs or they abandon routes to the upstarts. Southwest has pushed United out of many markets in the West, including the California corridor that United once dominated. United has matched JetBlue's fares from Oakland to Washington, D.C., but loses money on every flight, even full ones. As JetBlue and others continue to expand rapidly, the traditional airlines will suffer further reductions in profit unless they update their models. At the same time, the new airlines will adapt their models, especially as they begin to pursue the business flyer.

Southwest has locked itself out of the business market for all but short flights because its seats are cramped and cannot be reserved. JetBlue is a serious rival to the traditional airlines in transcontinental markets because it reserves seats. Other key features of the JetBlue model are a strong commitment to operating on time, operational efficiencies based on simple fares, and the lack of food service. By putting seats where old-fashioned airlines have galleys, JetBlue and Southwest have raised their revenue per planeload substantially. And nobody misses airline food.

But JetBlue cannot penetrate the upper echelons of the business market until it provides more space. Business travelers still pick the traditional airlines if they have a chance at business- or first-class because the single biggest factor in comfort on longer flights is the space between the rows of seats. The next step for JetBlue is to put in six rows of spacious seats in its planes and to charge a premium for them. By the same token, to survive, **the traditional airlines need to rip out their galleys, simplify their fares and service, and copy the operational efficiencies of the upstarts.**

The air traveler will see rapid changes in the next few years. Either American, United, and the other traditional airlines will adopt and improve the JetBlue model, or they will go the way of Eastern and Pan American.

— *Robert E. Hall*

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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AN AGENDA FOR INNOVATION

Now that midterm elections are over, agenda setting begins in earnest for the coming 108th U.S. Congress. And with opinion polls registering high levels of public concern over the economy, members of Congress are likely to be looking for ways to revive economic growth. They may want to consider the government's role in encouraging innovation.

Many economists agree that new knowledge, resulting from scientific discoveries and technological progress, is the most important contributor to increased productivity and growth in modern economies. In America today, with other drivers such as capital investment at relatively low levels, innovation is even more important.

Congress deserves credit for supporting innovation this past year by granting Trade Promotion Authority to the president. Trade liberalization is a priority for U.S. technology companies, many of which earn more than half their revenue abroad.

Much else can be done. Here are a few ideas for the session ahead:

Invest in human capital. The surest way to improve America's long-term economic prospects is to invest in the wellspring of innovation: the knowledge, skills and ingenuity of every American. Congress can look for ways to improve education, especially in math, science and engineering. And to keep the nation's brightest minds focused on innovation, Congress can use tax incentives and other policies to encourage investment in research and development.

Fight cybercrime. Attacks on computer networks impose enormous costs on the U.S. economy in lost productivity and resources allocated to security. The costs could go much higher if terrorists were to succeed in suspected plots to disrupt critical information infrastructures. And even without a terrorist attack, worries about security discourage the deployment of innovations. Microsoft and other technology companies accept our major role in protecting the nation's critical infrastructures, and Congress can help by strengthening penalties for cybercrime. We hope the Senate will approve the Cyber Security Enhancement Act, which passed the House in July by a vote of 385 to 3.

New ideas can strengthen the economy

Protect copyrights. The software industry is a major source of U.S. innovation and technological leadership. But the industry loses an estimated $11 billion annually to piracy and counterfeiting. These crimes drain the U.S. economy of thousands of jobs and millions of dollars in tax revenue. Congress should consider expansion in the funding and tools available for the FBI and other law-enforcement agencies to fight theft of intellectual property. Congress also should consider establishing civil and criminal penalties for trafficking in counterfeit certificates of product authenticity.

Clearly, government can promote innovation and economic growth in many additional ways. More ideas for a U.S. innovation agenda can be found at the Web address below.

One in a series of essays on technology and society. More information is available at microsoft.com/issues.

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